AUGUST
10th
1925
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PUBLISHED
THREE TIMES A MONTH

Adventure

Gordon Young
W. Townend
Leonard R. Nason
John Webb
H. Bedford-Jones
Frank E. Evans
F. St. Mars
Stanley Ashton
Barry Scobie Cuthell
Bill Adams
David [illegible]

3 Complete Novelettes

Adventure

Registered in U. S. Patent Office

August 10th 1925 Vol. LIV No. 1

Published Three Times a Month by The Ridgway Company

J. H. GANNON, President — C. H. HOLMES, Secretary and Treasurer

Spring and Macdougal Streets - - New York, N. Y.
6, Henrietta St., Covent Garden, London, W. C., England

Entered as Second-Class Matter, October 1, 1910, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879

ARTHUR SULLIVANT HOFFMAN, Editor

Yearly Subscription, $6.00 in advance

Single Copy, Twenty-Five Cents

Foreign postage, $3.00 additional. Canadian Postage, 90 cents.

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**Occasionally one of our stories will be called an "Off-the-Trail" story, a warning that it is in some way different from the usual magazine stories, perhaps a little different, perhaps a good deal. It may violate a canon of literature or a custom of magazines, or merely be different from the type usually found in this magazine. The difference may lie in unusual theme, material, ending, or manner of telling. No question of relative merit is involved.*

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One Complete Novel and Two Complete Novelettes

TROS thought that conquering was mainly dependent upon force of arms. When he got Cæsar in a tight fix and used strategy instead of brawn he thought differently. "HOSTAGES TO LUCK," a complete novel by Talbot Mundy, will appear in the next issue.

IT ALL began over a pair of holey black socks. Petty quarrels among the gobs do not often become as serious and prolonged as the *Smokum-Seasick* feud. "DIRECT DISOBEDIENCE," by Charles Victor Fischer, is a complete novelette in the next issue.

WHEN *Billee the Gringo* spoke of exploring the jungle country, the up-river men shook their heads in his youthful face. But *Billee* had more courage than they thought. "THE JEST OF THE JUNGLE" is a complete novelette of the Amazon by Gordon M. McCreagh in the next issue.

Other stories in the next issue are forecast on the last page of this one

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***Adventure* is out on the 10th, 20th and 30th of each month**

Adventure

August 10
1925
Vol. LIV. No. 1

The MIRACLE of the MISSION

A Complete Novelette

by W. Townend

Author of "In the Stokehole," "Peter the Greek," etc.

THE SUN was setting. The western sky was all gold and rose. The high mountains that encircled the Bay had taken on a shade of violet. The white buildings of the city of San Asensio, the vast cathedral with its dome and campanile, the opera house, the Palace of Justice, the castle of Old Spain, the rows of tall houses and warehouses on the quays, were flooded with pink. The calm waters of the harbor, far out into the Pacific, reflected the brightness of the sky.

Already the heat of the day seemed more bearable.

On the bridge deck of the S. S. *Mizen Head*, Mr. Cooper, the second engineer, sat on the port side bunker hatch and smoked his pipe and pondered.

How darned peaceful it all was! How calm, how solemn, almost, and quiet. And how darned different from the *Mizen Head*, where nothing went right and there was discord and unpleasantness from first thing in the morning to last thing at night!

From the galley there came the voice of the cook talking with the steward—

"To look at him and hear him talk, you'd think him a reg'lar man-eater, till it come to seein' him in action, an' then you'd know him for what he is, a wash-out."

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"He's weak, that's what he is, weak," said the steward. "An' what's the result? Look at the state the ship's in."

"No discipline," said the cook.

"I've had more trouble with the focsle hands givin' me lip about the grub this voyage than any voyage I can remember an' I been goin' to sea now donkey's years."

"A weak man's as bad as a bad man," said the cook. "In fack, worse."

Mr. Cooper frowned.

They were talking about the mate, of course. A man he'd been proud to think of as his friend! A man respected and liked for three whole voyages and now despised. The cause of all the trouble aboard.

It was strange how that manner of the mate's—that man-eating manner, as the cook would put it—should have helped him carry things off! His curtness, his gruffness, his contempt for all those not up to his standard of efficiency, his cold anger, had made him feared. No one had ever doubted him. No one had dared question either his authority or his courage till now.

"A penny for your thoughts, Mr. Cooper!"

The second engineer turned his head quickly.

The second mate, a tall, broad young man with a florid, beaming face and knowing eyes and a rather too patronising way of talking, was leaning with his back to the rail, smiling at him.

"Well, Mr. Mears, what are you doing?"

"Nothing. Just cooling off."

"Huh! What from?"

Mr. Mears chuckled.

"It's bustin' hot in the engine room and it isn't hot on deck! It never is, is it? You engineers are always trying to make out you have a worse time than anyone else on board, aren't you?"

"And don't we?" said the third engineer, who had just come out on deck from the engine room alley way. "Don't we have a worse time than any one else?"

"Mr. Barker," said Mr. Cooper, "dry up, for the love of Heaven!"

The steward and the cook were still talking in the galley.

"If you ask me what's the matter with him, I'd say he'd got cold feet," said the steward. "He's yeller!"

"Yes," said the cook, "he's yeller. I seen a good deal o' scrappin' in my time an' I've seen fellers look like him when they're up against someone too big for them to tackle. Scared an' afraid to show it! I used kind of to admire him, too! But now—lord!"

"Talking about the mate, aren't they?" said Mr. Barker.

Mr. Cooper nodded his head.

"Yes."

Mr. Mears scowled and grunted.

"Pity they haven't got something better to do," he said.

For some minutes no one spoke. Presently Mr. Mears said—

"Going ashore, Mr. Cooper?"

Mr. Cooper sucked at his pipe.

Yes, he was going ashore. Certainly! But the question was: Did he or did he not wish to go ashore with the second mate? He didn't!

And so, to avoid hurting the second mate's feelings, he said nothing but continued to gaze dreamily, as it were, toward the bridge of the vessel and the focsle head visible under the lower bridge.

And then he saw the mate.

HE CAME out of the port side saloon alley way, glanced about him, nervously, it seemed, and walked a few paces toward the group by the bunker hatch. As though not quite sure what his welcome would be, he halted between the No. 3 hatch and the gangway and stood, peering through half-closed eyelids, toward the bay and the open roadstead and the steamers riding at anchor.

He was a lean, square-shouldered man, not tall, but strong and wiry. His spare, hard face, clean-shaven, covered with tiny wrinkles, burnt a deep tan from exposure to sun and wind, was grave. His lips were pressed into a tight, hard line. His expression was grim and saturnine. His eyes were the eyes of a man who sees life as bitter and full of disappointment. Even before the disasters of the voyage when his authority had been flouted and any self-respect he mights have had destroyed, he had made few friends. He was aloof and distant, taciturn, slow in his movements, like a cat, yet like a cat capable of intense activity. Always he had been a mystery to his shipmates, never more so than now.

Mr. Cooper watched him intently and considered.

He and the mate had little in common. Days passed, weeks even, and they did not see each other. When they met they might

exchange a dozen words or so, perhaps no more. And yet he liked him.

He heard the second mate say suddenly to the third engineer:

"Yes, that's true, too! We've been shipmates, him and me, for three voyages and I know him no better than the day I first saw him. Why hasn't he ever said anything about himself? What's he so quiet for? Why doesn't he try and be more friendly, eh? What's he afraid of us finding out, eh?" He laughed his rather fat and oily laugh. "You wait, one of these days you'll hear something about the mate that 'ull surprize you!"

"Something not to his credit, eh?" said the third engineer eagerly.

The second mate grinned.

"You wait," he said.

Mr. Cooper knocked the dottel out of his pipe against his heel.

"Talk's cheap," he said. "On your own showing, Mr. Mears, you hardly know him, do you?"

"I know him enough to know he's no good, anyhow!"

"He's good enough for me," said Mr. Cooper. "What's wrong with him, eh?"

The third engineer touched Mr. Cooper on the shoulder.

"Look!" he said. "Don't miss this, whatever you do!"

Bull Mulligan, the big deck hand, who claimed that the heavyweight championship of the world would have been his but for the booze, was walking toward the gangway.

He wore his best suit, blue and rather tight in the chest and sleeves, with a soft gray hat, and was going ashore, obviously.

The mate, apparently, had not seen him.

The second mate said:

"Here's what's wrong with him and what's wrong with the ship, too! Mulligan! He's so scared he daren't say a word to him; consequence is, the hands do as they —— well like."

Mr. Cooper, not quite certain what would happen but sensing trouble, rose to his feet and advanced toward the mate, and then, in answer to Mr. Mears's whispered appeal of, "Wait, man! For the love of Mike, wait!" he halted.

Mr. Mears, a most unpleasant young man, wriggled in an ecstasy of enjoyment.

The mate was standing between Bull Mulligan and the gangway, still peering over the wharf and the railway cars toward the sweeping roadstead and the red glow of the sunset and the distant hills.

All at once Bull Mulligan put his hand to his mouth and bellowed:

"Gangway!"

His voice matched his height and frame.

The mate pivoted swiftly.

Mulligan nodded.

"That's right, mister, I want to pass!"

The mate said in his quiet way:

"Half a minute, Mulligan; where are you going?"

Mulligan rested his hands on his hips.

"Where am I goin'?" he boomed. "I'm goin' ashore! Is there any reason I shouldn't, Mister?"

In comparison with Mulligan the mate looked insignificant, even puny. The boxer was six or seven inches the taller of the two, broader, heavier by far. His width of shoulder and the length of his arm was out of all proportion to his height, so that he looked shorter than he really was.

The frown faded from his features, he laughed.

Mulligan's reputation as a fighter, his record as a professional in the ring against other professionals, had made life easy for him aboard the *Mizen Head*. No one in the focsle had dared to stand up to him. It was his boast that not even the officers could make him do what he didn't want once he'd made up his mind not to.

And though he had avoided trouble so far it seemed that at last he was in open conflict with authority.

He stood leering at Mr. Clarke, his large head on one side, his eyes screwed into two slits, malicious and triumphant.

"You're going ashore, are you,"said the mate. "Is that it?"

"That's it!" said Mulligan. "I'm goin' ashore!"

"I thought you were told to stay aboard!"

The mate's voice was low and his manner restrained, yet every word he spoke carried clearly, so that the cook and the steward ceased their talk and left the galley and stood with the second and third engineers and the second mate by the door of the fiddley.

"I'm not goin' to stay aboard," said Mulligan, "not for you, nor no one! I'm going ashore. You can't stop me!"

He stepped back, then, and dropped his hands to his sides and waited.

The mate looked him up and down, casually, as it were, his face in the half light grave, composed, stern.

"By actual force, perhaps not," he said. "All the same, you're not going ashore!"

"Well, then, I am!"

Mulligan was growing angry.

"You were told to stay aboard," said the mate. "You've been in trouble with the police, you've done no work for two days, you said this morning you were sick and couldn't turn out. You weren't sick, of course; if you were, you're sick now. Go for'ard and stay there."

Mulligan said:

"Out o' my way, you! D'jer hear me? Out o' my way, or I'll bust you one on the jaw!"

He brushed the mate to one side and swaggered down the gangway.

The mate did not move.

"My ——!" said the second mate. "Would you believe it! Did you see that! Did you! That's what we've got for a mate!"

He walked to where Mr. Clarke was standing.

Mr. Cooper, sorry that any man he called his friend could show himself so weak, yet furious with the second mate, followed him.

The mate glanced over his shoulder.

"Well, Mr. Mears?" he said.

"I thought that man, Mulligan, wasn't to go ashore."

"No," said the mate mildly, "he wasn't! But he's gone. What about it?"

The second mate seemed taken aback.

"What's the sense in asking me that? I tell you, Mr. Clarke, straight, man to man, you've let us down; all of us, deck and engine room! Mulligan treats you like dirt. D'you think we didn't see and hear what he said? It's rotten, that's what it is! Why didn't you knock him down?"

The mate's lips twitched in a little smile.

"Why didn't I knock him down? Why should I?"

"Why should you!" The second mate spluttered. "Because Mulligan deliberately disobeyed orders, that's why! He knows now he can do as he likes! You're afraid of him!"

"Am I?" said the mate quietly.

"Of course you are! If you weren't, you'd have given him a smack on the jaw!"

Mr. Cooper said gruffly:

"You've got to be careful when you've a man like Mulligan to deal with. He'd have eaten Mr. Clarke and you know it!"

The second mate laughed.

"Sure he would, if he'd had the chance! But would he? He's a professional boxer, of course; as good as any of 'em three years ago, I daresay, good enough now in a free for all—but what's that amount to? If you'd hit him, Mr. Clarke, taken a risk for once, as you ought to have done, and Mulligan had tried any of his tricks, he'd have had to tackle the lot of us! See! You don't expect Marquess o' Queensbury rules aboard ship, do you? If a deck hand starts rough-housin' an officer, pile on top of him and kick his slats in! That's Western Ocean rules and good enough for any of us!"

"If you'd been in my place, Mr. Mears, would *you* have hit Mulligan?"

"Hit Mulligan?" said Mr. Mears. "Of course I'd have hit him! Why the —— not? Mulligan's a tough egg, but he's human same as the rest of us, isn't he?"

There was a strange earnestness in the mate's voice.

"MR. MEARS," he said, "one thing I'd like to ask you; do you really think I was afraid of Mulligan?"

The second mate burst out furiously:

"You're afraid of him because he came aboard drunk once and gave you some lip! You ought to have smashed him then, but you didn't! You're afraid of him, he knows it, and that's the reason there's been nothing but —— trouble aboard this ship since we left New York!"

The mate nodded, then turned on his heel and walked slowly in the direction of the saloon alleyway.

The second mate's face was flushed.

"Say, that settled him, didn't it? Didn't expect me to talk like that, did he? But that's me all over! I'm not scared, if he is. The —— little fool! I hate a coward worse than a pickpocket. That's what he is, a coward!"

Mr. Cooper leaned on the rail.

Was the second mate right or wasn't he? Had the mate really been scared of Mulligan?

He remembered the expression in that hard, maghogany face, the smile, half amused, half ironical, the little shrug of the broad shoulders as Mulligan had threatened him. He hadn't looked scared anyway!

"Mebbe there's more in it than seems,"

he said. "Whatever the mate is, Mr. Mears, and I know him better than any one else aboard this ship, he's no coward!"

The second mate sneered.

"Shows you don't know him as well as you think, then! Anyway, don't let's talk of him. He makes me sick!"

Mr. Cooper grunted.

"Mebbe you make him sick, too, Mister."

The third engineer laughed shortly.

"Going ashore?" said the second mate after a while.

Mr. Cooper nodded.

"Yes." And now, once again, he was being forced to consider what his decision would be: Did he or did he not intend to go ashore with the second mate? No, he didn't!

"We'll go together, eh?" said Mr. Mears.

"Any other night, I'd be tickled to death," said Mr. Cooper politely, "but tonight, it's different!"

"Different?" said the second mate and the third engineer together.

"Different," said Mr. Cooper stolidly.

Darkness had fallen, the moon had not yet risen, nevertheless it was easy enough to see that the second mate and the third engineer were grinning broadly.

"I've promised to pay a call on a friend," he said.

The second mate and the third engineer broke into shouts of laughter.

"Who is she?" said Mr. Mears. "Eh?"

"When you've quite finished playing the fool, perhaps you'll gimme a chance to explain! I said I'd look in at the Mission tonight!"

"Lord!" said Mr. Mears. "That's the weakest excuse *I* ever heard! Come on, Mr. Cooper, own up! What's her name?"

"I'm telling you the truth," said Mr. Cooper. "The man who's running the Sailors' Mission here comes from the same place I do. I didn't know him back home, but he's a —— good little man, for a sky pilot. He's got a —— tough job by the look of things, and I'm sorry for him. I'd be sorry for any man running a Sailors' Mission in a dump like this, too! He asked me to come and see him tonight and have a talk and I said I would."

"Well, well!" said Mr. Mears, shaking his head. "That I should live to hear of a second engineer wasting valuable time at a Sailors' Mission! Would you believe it? You're a rum little beggar, aren't you?"

"Not so rum as you are, Mister! What are you driving at?"

"You take up with such a —— queer crowd! Why don't you be sensible and come along with me, eh? But you won't, I know. You'd rather be pals with men like Clarke and a sky pilot. He laughed as one who, though annoyed, yet tries to pretend he is amused. "Tell you what, you'll not be dull, anyway; you'll probably have quite a jolly evening with Mulligan!"

"Don't get you," said Mr. Cooper.

The second mate laughed again.

"From what they tell me, Mr. Cooper—they bein' the bosun and the third mate—though how *he* knows beats me!—from what they tell me this bird Mulligan's got a trick when he's well soused of dropping into the Mission, whichever port he's in, to teach the merchant in charge where he belongs. Understand? He doesn't hold with Missions, Mulligan doesn't! He says it's *his* mission, y'understand, to clean 'em up! I'm a bit of a reformer myself, but I don't indulge in it to that extent, I must say! If Mulligan gets busy when you're there, Mr. Cooper, don't you get cold feet. Plug him one on the nose and see what happens!"

"I'll have a darn' good shot at it, anyhow!" said Mr. Cooper.

And then he saw that the mate was on deck again, leaning against the rail at the second mate's elbow; smiling his half-amused, half ironical smile. And for no real reason Mr. Cooper felt all of a sudden uncomfortable as though he had been discovered in something mean or not quite honorable.

ABOVE the tinkle of a piano and the voice of a man singing in a rather high and feeble tenor, another voice, deep and resonant, boomed out—

"Stop it! D'jer hear? Stop that noise!"

As though at a word of command the music broke off abruptly.

Mr. Cooper halted on the landing at the head of a flight of stone steps outside the rooms occupied by the Sailors' Mission in the house at the corner of the Calle Salamanca and the Plaza de Julio.

A man was peering through the half-open door.

He turned.

Mr. Cooper recognized him as an old

seaman employed by the Mission as cook and caretaker and storeman.

What's the trouble?" said Mr. Cooper.

"That feller's here again! Some day there'll be murder round here, sure as my name's Jones."

He stepped to one side and Mr. Cooper passed through the doorway and once more halted.

The room was long and narrow, lit by electric light, with four high windows, all of them open to the blue, hot darkness, one overlooking the Calle Salamanca and the other three facing the Plaza. Here some twenty or so seafaring men, sailors and firemen, sat on benches and chairs or stood with their backs to Mr. Cooper. At the far end of the room from the door was a low platform with an upright piano and two men, one on his feet, the other seated on a piano stool, both looking somewhat uneasy, and staring at Bull Mulligan who stood in the open floor space between the platform and the front row of benches. And as Mr. Cooper watched he saw above the heads of the audience Mr. Simpson, the Chaplain to the Mission, a little, nervous looking man, with graying hair and spectacles, standing by Mulligan's side, apparently reasoning with him. The noise was so great it was impossible to hear what he was saying.

Mulligan, who was obviously drunk, was laughing at him.

A man who stood on one of the benches shouted:

"Good on yer, Bull! That's the stuff!"

Some one tilted the bench and he fell with a crash amid roars of laughter.

With no intention of interfering Mr. Cooper made his way slowly between the rows of benches and a long table covered with books and papers toward the far end of the room.

"What's that?" Mulligan was saying. "What's that, Mister?"

He swayed on his feet and only saved himself from falling, so it seemed, by grabbing the little man's shoulders.

"You're spoiling the evening for everybody," said Mr. Simpson.

"That ain't the truth on the face of it," said Mulligan. "What's more, the evening's over. Those stiffs got to get back to their ships. If they don't, Mister, leave 'em to me! I'll clear 'em out pretty —— quick! See! Me!" Still keeping his left hand on the Chaplain's shoulder he tapped his chest with his right. "Besh' scrapper in San—San Francisco!"

"San Asensio!" said a voice. "Where you think you are, Bull?"

Mulligan laughed and shook his head.

"Well, well!"—he seemed, as it were, amused by his own befuddlement—"That 'splains everyzing, don't it! An' me lookin' for Market Street an' Geary an' Kearney an' the ol' Barbary Coast dance halls all evenin', eh! Well, well!"

"Hadn't you better be going?" said Mr. Simpson.

"That's ri'!" said Mulligan. "That's why I got up! I wouldn't stay no longer place li' this, mister! I'm goin' where feller can have some fun! Un'stand? But firs' all I wanna tell you, this place's poison! Un'stand? Run all wrong. Falsh pre'nces! Wha' you wanna 'tice 'spectable men in dive li' this for, eh?" He flung his right arm in the direction of the platform and the singer and his accompani st. "Wha' you wanna have couple pie-faced tom-cats squallin' hymns for, eh?"

"Not hymns, friend," said Mr. Simpson. "We're rehearsing one or two songs for our concert the day after tomorrow!"

"Another lie!" said Mulligan. "How you are crackin' on, ain't yer! Two lies, in fack! It was sings he was hymnin', hymns he was singin', I mean!" Again Mulligan laughed feebly. "It was, an' I'm no frien' o' yours, neither! See! An' now, don't get excited; bad for you! I'm goin'! I wouldn' shtay 'nother minute, polluted a'mosphere! I'm go'n' smash that grinnin' ape at the pianner first!"

Mr. Simpson grabbed his jacket and held him. Mulligan tried to free himself. The singer and the accompanist slid off the platform and escaped.

The audience shouted.

"Listen," said Mr. Simpson earnestly; "listen to reason, please!"

"This here place is too much like a prayer meetin' to please me," said Mulligan. "I got a good mind never to come here again!"

"It makes no difference to me whether you come or not! If you do come, I insist on your behaving yourself in a decent manner!" The little man's face was pink. "I want to help you, but if you don't want to be helped, I'm powerless. If you're intent on making a beast of yourself, you've got all the city to do it in. Leave the Mission alone!"

Mulligan rocked with laughter.

"——! If I wanna make a beast o' myself, which I've a good mind to smack your face for say'n' so, I'll do it, wherever I choose! Nex' thing I s'pose you'll tell me I mustn't bring whisky here, eh?"

"I certainly wouldn't permit you to bring whisky here, and you know it!"

"Well, how you go'n' to stop me, eh?" said Mulligan. "I brought a bo'l' in wi' me jus' now! You can't take it away, neither! 'Cause why? It's inside me!" Again he shouted with tipsy laughter and the other men standing around shouted, too. "Anyway, I'm tired the way this ol' Mission's run! If I hadn' to go meet friend o' mine, an' if it wasn' so late, I'd show what I mean! Wha' we wan' 's a li'l' life an' excitemen'! Prayin's no good! Why not give's a dance, eh? Li' this!"

He grabbed the little chaplain around his body with his big arms and yelled:

"Hi! strike up a tune, one o' you stiffs! Give's a l'l' rag time! Me an' the sky pilot's go'n' to dance!"

And then Mr. Cooper interfered.

"Mulligan," he said, "cut that out!"

He grabbed Mulligan's arm.

Mulligan turned and glared. He let go his grip on the little chaplain.

"It's you, is it? The Rev'ren' Cooper! Second eng'neer o' the *Mizen Head!*" His lips parted in a wide grin, showing yellow, discolored teeth. "Another sky pilot, eh! Taken bad with religion, are yer, or what? I'm go'n' show you darn' preachers you can't take away the few pleasures we poor stiffs got left! We're men, we are, not an'mals!"

He thrust his face forward to within a couple of inches of Mr. Cooper's and scowled.

Mr. Cooper stayed where he was. He hoped Mulligan wouldn't see how scared he was. He said doggedly:

"You'd better clear out, Mulligan, before there's more trouble! You want the police, do you?"

"The police, yah!" Mulligan sneered. "Listen, fellers! These pie-cans can't tackle things themselves like other men, they got to send for the lousy police! That's their way o' spreadin' religion. They'll feed yer prayers an' hymns an' such-like slop in buckets an' then if you won't swaller the dope, it's send for the police!" He grinned at Mr. Cooper. "Here, little man, do yer know what I'm goin' to do to the police if they come here? Do yer?"

"No," said Mr. Cooper, "I don't! But do you know what I'm going to do to you?"

Again Mulligan, who seemed to have suddenly grown sober, thrust his face close to his.

"Well, boy, what are you goin' to do, eh?"

"This!" said Mr. Cooper.

He lashed out with his right and hit Mulligan on the tip of his flat nose with all his strength.

He heard a bellow of rage and then before he could make a move to guard himself, before he realized quite what was bound to happen, Mulligan's heavy fist crashed. There was a flash like lightning before his eyes, a stabbing agony across his forehead, and he fell.

Before he could stir, Mulligan pounced on him. He grabbed him around the neck and dragged him to his feet and shook him.

"You little swine!" he said. "You pukin' little swine!"

Mr. Cooper, dazed and suffocated but grimly determined not to show that he was hurt, raised his hands and clutched at the deck hand's wrist and tried to free himself.

MULLIGAN snarled and swung him round, his feet dragging the floor boards.

The pressure on his throat was intolerable. He could not breathe. He felt that his senses were leaving him. He heard as at a distance screams of laughter. Some one was saying:

"Let him be, can't you! You, Mulligan, you blackguard, let him be."

And then the pressure on his throat was relaxed and he was flung helplessly against a table and collapsed.

He lay for a moment on the floor, stunned, exhausted, blinking at the lights above him.

When he raised his head Mulligan was dusting his hands lightly and grinning.

"That's the style, Mr. Cooper! That's the way I treats sky pilots an' such-like scum. Now, you go aboard an' tell them brass-bound stiffs what I done to you. Tell 'em an' ask what they got to say about it. See! Tell that ruddy mate. But you done more than he'd do, anyway. You hit me. If I hadn't been in such a —— good temper tonight, along o' what I've drunk, I'd ha' turned you over my knee an' spanked you

like I spank my kid brother. If you'd ha' been a grown man, mister, you might ha' hurt me. But next time you take any liberties wi' me, —— help you! Know who I am? I'm Fightin' Bull Mulligan, heavyweight champion o' the Pacific Ocean an' the Atlantic! An' I'm out to shut down these —— Missions that are makin' the life o' poor seafarin' men mis'rable. I'm go'n' now, but I'll be back tomorrer, some time. See! An' not alone, neither! What's-your-name — you, Simpson — you listen! You gimme a pain. For two pins I'd push the back o' your head through yer glass winders. Understand! I'm Fightin' Bull Mulligan, I am, an' don't you forget it when you say yer prayers."

Mulligan jerked first one shoulder forward, then the other, thrust out his chest, brought his hands up to a fighting attitude, made two or three sparring motions with his arms, ducked his head, scowled, stamped his left foot, grinned and walked out.

Mr. Cooper scrambled to his feet.

"Are you hurt?" said Mr. Simpson.

"N-no," said Mr. Cooper. "Don't think so! Head's on my shoulders, anyway."

The room was emptying. Most of the men had already drifted out after Mulligan.

A few still lingered.

The cook and the steward of the *Mizen Head* drew near.

"Mr. Cooper," the cook said, "I'm proud to know you! I've not seen anythin' half as good as that punch o' yours since Jack Johnson fought Tommy Burns or that bumboat woman at Marseilles hit the *Salvador's* skipper. You're all right, you are! I tell you, it takes some pluck to stand up to Bull Mulligan, but you done it."

The steward was pessimistic.

"Mr. Cooper, I'm warnin' you," he said. "You look out for Mulligan! He's bad medicine."

"I wouldn't have thought you had it in you!" said the cook. "You're not what I'd call a Herc'les, are yer? Mulligan is. What's more, booze don't seem to make no difference to him! He was half canned tonight!"

"Else, mebbe," said the steward, "you wouldn't have got off so easy!"

"Easy!" said Mr. Cooper. "Look at my eye."

"Don't worry about that, mister," said the cook, "I got a piece o' steak aboard that'll get that right in no time! Well, glad I lived long enough to see that punch o' yours. Good-night, all!"

"An' don't forget what I told you, Mr. Cooper," said the steward. "You look out for Mulligan! Soon as he's sobered up, he'll want to just about half kill you!"

When the last sailor had gone and the door leading to the stairs was locked, Mr. Simpson said in a tired voice:

"Mr. Cooper, I'm afraid you've had rather a tough deal!"

Mr. Cooper grinned.

"I ought to apologize, oughtn't I? Mebbe if I hadn't have hit Mulligan first there'd have been no trouble." He chuckled. "All the same, I'm glad. If *you* don't mind, Mr. Simpson, I don't. It's all in the day's work, isn't it? If I hurt him only half as much as he hurt me, I've done some good in the world."

"I'm not in favor of brawling, of course, or fighting either, Mr. Cooper. It's against my principles, naturally. Turn the other cheek, you know. But with Mulligan, it's different." The little man sighed. "I'm inclined to think, Mr. Cooper, that you saved us. If you hadn't hit him when you did and, so to speak, distracted his attention—yes, as sound and as shrewd a blow as I ever saw—if you hadn't done that, he and his friends would have given me more trouble than they did!"

They sat on chairs by one of the open windows. The arc lamps cast an orange glow on the Plaza de Julio with its palm trees and fountain and the crowd of men and women strolling to and fro and the clanging street cars. To the left, between white buildings, the lights of the shipping in the harbor shone in the blue darkness. The big bell of the Cathedral tolled the half hour.

Mr. Simpson put his hands to his worn face.

"I'm weary and heartsick. He comes here every night, Mulligan does, on one pretext or another. He says he'll wreck the Mission, ruin me, drive me out of San Asensio."

"He's nothing against you, personally, Mr. Simpson, has he?"

"Why should he have?" said the little man. "Why should he?" His hand opened and shut on the window sill. He looked old and sick. "He's one of those men you can't handle through ordinary means. He seems to have no decent instincts. Not

even sportsmanship. I wanted to help him. He made mock of me. Yet how can I blame him? Mr. Cooper, when I think of those men, Mulligan and his kind, in a port like this, the prey of the scum of the earth, robbed by harpies, male and female, abused, debauched, diseased, God Almighty! I feel —" He raised his hand to his throat. "I feel that I'm being choked! I want to do some good in the world, and I can't! I'm useless."

Mr. Cooper considered. How little, after all, he knew of the history of the man by whose side he sat.

"You had a church back home, didn't you?"

"Did you ever go inside that church, Mr. Cooper? No, you didn't! How many men did? A few! Not many. You and the others, you stayed outside! I had a church, yes; half empty: A congregation of women, well-dressed, well-to-do, idle. You may say wherever one is there's the Lord's work waiting to be done. I don't know! My life was too easy, too pleasant. I was soft and flabby, in body and mind and soul. I grew self-indulgent. I had neither ambition nor spirituality. I degenerated."

The little man dabbed at his damp forehead with a rolled-up pocket handkerchief.

"AND then, Mr. Cooper, my eyes were opened. There was work that I should have done that I avoided. I might have brought comfort to a dying woman, and I didn't! She was one of those poor creatures I considered bad. Her son, a sailor home from a voyage, came to me after she was dead and said things that hurt. I saw myself as he saw me. I knew—we needn't go into that part of it now—I knew that if I wanted to redeem myself I must take on a man's work. You understand. I had to do something that wouldn't be easy.

"Mr. Cooper, all my instincts were to stay where I was, with my friends, my church, my congregation, my home, my library. But I didn't dare! I was afraid. I heard of this Mission work among seamen and I felt it was what I was looking for. It was. It's harder than I thought. But it's the the right work for me! I ought to explain, Mr. Cooper, at heart I'm a coward. It's taken more out of me than you might think to have to mingle with sailors, seamen, firemen, and such-like. One of my great failings, my many failings, was narrow-mindedness. I judged others by hard and fast standards; right was right, wrong wrong. I was bigoted! I hadn't learnt the great lesson of charity. I'd preached to the well-to-do, the respectable, the sheltered. I hadn't met with sin in the raw. No, Mr. Cooper, I wasn't one of those men who can go out into the street and bring comfort to sinners! I hated sin. I hated the sinner. I never saw I was a sinner myself, Mr. Cooper. I never realized that there are worse sins than the sins of the flesh! What kind of a man would I be, if I had to live in a tramp steamer focsle? Worse than I am now, or better? Better, perhaps. Why, yes, better by far!

"Mr. Cooper, I made up my mind when I left home and came to San Asensio that I'd make a success of my work. I'd do some good in the world, if I could. I'd help others to gain a little happiness. I'd try. I'd learn the meaning of humility, sacrifice, forbearance: Never so long as I lived would I judge any man as I'd judged men in the past. I've tried my utmost—it's not been easy—and now, after all this time, I'm faced with the consciousness of failure. Yes, I've failed. Failed badly. The men have no respect for me. They laugh at me. Yes, it's the truth! Laugh at me!"

"What they need is a —— good kicking!" said Mr. Cooper.

"No, friend, that's where you're wrong. No, they're good men at heart, sound, likeable, but they want teaching. What chance have most of them had? Mulligan now! What chance has he had?"

"I'd chance him," said Mr. Cooper, "with a monkey wrench on the top of his blasted head!"

"No, Mr. Cooper, please. That's not right! He needs instruction. Its ignorance, Mr. Cooper. Ignorance. And tonight, when I ought to have been patient with him, I lost my temper! I'm hopeless!"

"You're not," said Mr. Cooper. "You're doing fine."

"I wish I could think so. I need to look at things from Mulligan's point of view. He thinks I'm interfering with his happiness. That's why he dislikes me. You understand. He feels it his duty to make my work here impossible, if he can!"

For a long time neither spoke. Then Mr. Simpson said:

"I can't give in! I can't!"

He rose to his feet and stood looking out of the window into the night.

"I must find some way, Mr. Cooper, to teach Mulligan his lesson. There must be something that will help me. There is a way, surely!"

Mr. Cooper didn't stay very much longer. He drank a cup of coffee and said it was time to be going.

He wondered dubiously as he walked quickly across the Plaza and down on to the quays how Mr. Simpson would deal with Mulligan when he next visited the Mission. The little man talked of a way to teach him his lesson. The lesson Mulligan needed was a —— good hiding from some one bigger and stronger than himself. And where was that some one to be found? Not on the *Mizen Head*, anyway!

From early morning Mr. Cooper had been aware that his quarrel with Mulligan was known from one end of the ship to the other. He pretended that he did not care. He did care enormously.

He went about his work in the engine room, tormented by the knowledge that the firemen and trimmers were smiling at him and whispering.

He strained his ears to hear what they said, while showing no sign of interest.

Once he heard the donkeyman say to the storekeeper:

"What in ——'s the good o' buttin' in where he's not wanted! He goes on doin' things any fool should have known better not to, an' then when he gets a smack in the eye——"

The storekeeper glanced quickly over his shoulder. "S'sh," he whispered softly and clattered up the ladder to the store.

The donkeymen turned once more to the vise bench where he was cutting disks of gauze wire to the shape of a joint for a steam pipe.

They were talking about himself, Mr. Cooper knew.

At dinner in the engineers' mess room, a hot and unsavory meal, the gruff old chief growled at him:

"Mr. Cooper, when are you going to begin learning sense?"

"How do you mean, sir?"

"What right had you to go interfering with that big deck hand last night? You ought to have had more sense! You might have known he'd just about kill you!"

"Why should we knuckle under to a swine like Mulligan?" said Mr. Cooper hotly.

"Who's talking about knuckling under? You leave the deck hands alone—you're not a deck officer! Another thing, let the sky pilot up at the Mission do his own dirty work. You've been going to sea long enough now to know you get no thanks for doing more than you're paid to do. Don't interfere with other people. That's my advice. Try and follow it!"

"I may have laid myself open to a black eye from Mulligan," said Mr. Cooper, "but I'm blessed if I see even now what else I could do!" He glanced around the table. The faces of the third and fourth engineers gave him no very great encouragement. "Any one else would have done what I did!" he said.

The chief engineer grunted.

"I doubt it! Not if they were sane, anyway."

Mr. Cooper said no more. He wished now he'd never met Simpson! He wished he'd never gone to the Mission. He wished—After all, was it fair to blame little Simpson for what wasn't his fault?"

And then all the stubbornness in his nature rose in revolt. Simpson was a friend of his. He'd stand by him. He didn't care if he had to face fifty Mulligans! What could Mulligan do? Nothing!

Mr. Cooper did not meet any of the mates until he had finished his work for the day.

And then, as he sat in his own room, smoking a pipe, wondering what he should do with himself till bed time there was a sound of quick footsteps and a knock at the door.

"COME in!" he said.

The second mate entered.

Before Mr. Cooper could say a word he broke into a shout of laughter.

"The hero!" he said. "Behold the hero! The fighting man! The conqueror of Fighting Bull Mulligan!" He flung up his right hand toward the ceiling and placed his left hand on his heart. "The hero! The he-man with red blood and a black eye!"

"Don't be a blasted fool!" said Mr. Cooper.

The second mate dropped his hands to his sides and chuckled.

"I won't! Mr. Cooper, you've taken ten

years off my life! Gosh! When I heard how you'd tackled Mulligan I said to myself: 'That's the man for my money! Johnny Cooper, the man with the k.o. punch!' In passing, my lad, I'll remark that Mulligan's nose is one of the juiciest sights I've seen!"

Mr. Cooper was not amused. He said rather grimly:

"Sit down, Mr. Mears! Be sensible or else beat it!"

The second mate dropped on to the settee, his plump and florid face very serious, almost too serious, his wise eyes twinkling.

"Look-a-here!" he said. "Whatever made you want to go getting mixed up in a scrap with Mulligan for, eh?"

"He's trying to wreck the Mission."

"Let him," said the second mate. "What's the odds? The *Mizen Head* won't be lying in San Asensio for ever. Soon's this lightermen's strike is over and we load our cargo we'll be away and the feller in charge of the Mission 'ull get busy again. If you'd had a real reason for hitting Mulligan I wouldn't mind—but you hadn't."

Mr. Cooper felt that he did not like Mr. Mears and never would. He might be a friendly enough sort of man, but there was a mean streak in him that spoilt him.

The second mate went on—

"If you let deck hands roughhouse you like that, what's to become of the rest of us; discipline and all that sort o' thing, eh?"

Mr. Cooper growled:

"Discipline! There's —— little aboard this packet so far as I can see, anyway!"

"And what else can you expect with a mate like we've got!"

"What's wrong with the mate?"

"Nothing!" said Mr. Mears. "Oh, nothing! Only what you did last night, or tried to, he wouldn't dare! And why not? Because he's a coward!"

There was another knock at the door and the mate's voice said:

"You there, Mr. Cooper?"

"Come in, Mr. Clarke!"

The second mate grinned sheepishly.

The mate, tight-lipped, grim, saturnine, haggard, glanced at him and nodded imperceptibly, almost.

"Mr. Cooper, I feel like a walk ashore. Will you come?"

"You bet!" said Mr. Cooper.

"Seems to me," said the second mate, "you're more popular than I'd imagined you were. I was just going to ask you to come ashore with me!"

"But you didn't!" said Mr. Cooper.

"H'm! Don't want to make it a threesome, do you?" said the second mate.

"No," said the mate coldly. "No, Mr. Mears, you and I see enough of each other in the ordinary course of events without spoiling the evening for both of us!"

The second mate grinned.

"All right! Don't blame you, Mister!" He turned to Mr. Cooper who saw in his expression a strange spite. "Well, Mister, you'll be able to put in a useful hour or so hunting your pal, Mulligan!"

"What's happened to him?"

"Been missing since yesterday afternoon. Mebbe you scared him last night! If you see him, fetch him aboard. The two of you ought to be able to manage him, or if you can't, you better get the sky pilot from the Mission to lend a hand."

The mate said:

"Mr. Mears, you talk a —— sight more than's good for your health! Get out!"

The second mate glared and then lowered his eyes suddenly, gave a shrug of his broad shoulders and walked out.

Mr. Cooper was puzzled but said nothing.

When they reached the quay, the mate said:

"If I don't get some exercise, I'll croak! Let's walk!"

They tramped in silence away from the city, out along the dusty road past white villas and big gardens full of flowering shrubs and trees into the open country, four miles to the point where the lighthouse flashed its red-and-white light and the surf thundered sluggishly on the rocks far beneath. The full moon shone on the calm waters of the Pacific. Far out at sea there showed the lights of a steamer bound south.

For the first time since they had left the quay the mate spoke:

"——! it's fine. I tell you, Mister, it's this kind o' thing that makes you see how little good you've done in the world and how much harm. You feel you want to be better and never do wrong any more! That's how it gets *me*, anyway!"

Mr. Cooper said nothing.

"I've done a heap of harm in my time," the mate continued in his low, deep voice, "but there's this—I've paid for it. Yes, by ——! I've paid for it!"

Mr. Cooper was startled.

Harm! What harm had the mate done? There wasn't a straighter, cleaner, more honorable man going to sea than he was. There was only the one possible thing against him.

And suddenly, though he knew he was doing wrong, against all reason and common sense, he spoke of what was troubling him.

"Mr. Clarke," he said, "you know what they're saying about you on board, don't you?"

"No," said the mate, staring out to sea, "what?"

"They say you're afraid of Mulligan!"

"Do they!" said the mate. He did not even appear interested.

"They say the discipline on the ship's gone to pieces because Mulligan can do as he likes with you."

"Oh!" said the mate. "Do you believe that?"

Mr. Cooper hesitated.

"No, I don't."

The mate nodded.

"Thank you," he said.

After that he was silent again. Mr. Cooper decided he was even more difficult to understand than he had imagined.

The minutes passed. The mate jumped to his feet.

"Let's move," he said.

THE big bell of the Cathedral was striking nine when they reached the big square in the center of the city, the Plaza de San Juan. Neither had said a word on the way back from the light house at the point. They halted by the colonnade of the Palace of Justice.

"Care for a drink?" said the mate.

"Suppose so," said Mr. Cooper. "Yes."

He wondered then what had become of Mr. Simpson. He felt a twinge of remorse. He had abandoned a friend. He ought, he knew now, to have stopped at the Mission as soon as he came ashore and asked if Mulligan had been there or if there was anything he could do.

"I ought to go across to the Mission and see if everything's all right!" he said.

"The Mission!" said Mr. Clark. "Whatever for?"

"I'm afraid Mulligan will have been there making trouble."

"Mister," said the mate, "you let those Mission people look after their own affairs! Take it from me no good comes from getting yourself mixed up with parsons and religion."

Mr. Cooper found himself out of his depth. The more he saw of the mate the more perplexed he was. The man was a mystery.

And then, while he hesitated, not knowing what to say next, he heard a chuckle of unsober laughter and turning saw Mulligan.

"Hullo, you two! Hullo! The dep'ty sky pilot an' the mate! Look at 'em."

The mate, grim and stern looking, and yet, as Mr. Cooper realized with a pang, physically a coward, said—

"Mulligan, why were'nt you on board today?"

"Why?" said Mulligan. "Because I didn't choose, that's why." He winked at Mr. Cooper. "I've got bus'ness 'shore here! 'Portant bus'ness! I'm go'n' bust the Mission! Un'stan'? I'm go'n' there to-ni', I am, to take that guy, Simpson, an' welt the life out him! Un'stan'? Soon's I've had 'nother whisky, I'm go'n'! Me an' some pals o' mine." He laughed. "If you two ain' do'n' nothin' in pertickler you better come an' see me wreck the joint."

"You'd better go back aboard, Mulligan, unless you want to get into trouble! You're making a nuisance of yourself. I'm getting tired of it!"

Mulligan rose on his toes and lowered himself on to his heels. He dug his hands into his trouser pockets and grinned.

"You're gettin' tired, are yer? Well, Mister, I'm not one o' those men you can bluff like you can the others! See? You've got to treat me rough or I'll treat you rough! That's the sorta man I am! See? S'pose I gi' you a shove in the face, eh? What'll you do, then? Get more tired, or what?"

Mr. Cooper glanced from one to the other. An arc lamp cast a glow on their brown faces. But whereas the deck hand smiled easily, as though sure of himself, the mate looked worried and anxious. There was an uneasiness in his eyes that seemed to express the fear he felt.

A sudden shame swept over Mr. Cooper. The mate had said out at the point that he had done wrong; that might be, but he had done no greater wrong than in letting the focsle hands of the *Mizen Head* know he was a coward. He was smaller than Mulligan,

of course, and lighter, yet so strong, so muscular and active, that his disinclination to risk a thrashing degraded him and put him on a lower level than even Mulligan himself.

"Well," said Mulligan, "s'pose I gi' you a shove in the face!"

He thrust his face nearer the mate's.

The mate backed, Mulligan followed him.

Two or three people had stopped in the colonnade to watch.

"S'pose I gi' you a shove in the face!" said Mulligan once more.

It was then that Mr. Cooper interfered for the second time.

The mate was a coward. Nevertheless, he was his friend. Was he to stand aside and watch Mulligan crow over him? ——, no!

He abandoned all discretion and put himself boldly between the mate and the deck hand.

"Mulligan," he said, "you get to —— out o' here! Beat it!"

For a moment Mulligan gaped at him and did not speak. It seemed from the goggling expression in his eyes that he was too amazed, almost, too stunned, to be angry.

He laughed:

"Well, my bantam, I thought I'd settled you last night for keeps! I won't hit you again! No! I guess I got more humanity!"

He shot out his right arm. The heel of the palm of his hand caught Mr. Cooper a terrific blow under the chin, jerked back his head with a wrench that jarred his spine and sent him staggering into the arms of a man who caught and held him.

"You try buttin' in once more," said Mulligan, "jus' once, an' I'll lick yer proper!"

"That'll do, Mulligan!" said the mate. "Cut it out."

"Cut it out, eh! Who ses so?"

Mr. Cooper put his hands to his neck. He felt sick and dizzy. Even now he would have fallen but for the arm that supported him.

Mulligan and the mate argued.

"You say so, do yer?" said the deck hand. "I'm glad to hear it! An' now, seein' you've said all you got to say, I'm goin' to round up my pals an' then I'm goin' to turn ol' Simpson out into the street an' duck him! That little stiff wants to close the town up, he does! Well, before he does, I'll close him up, tight an' fast!"

"You won't," said the mate.

Mr. Cooper, a little less weak and tottery, was amazed that he still stood his ground. He watched, fascinated and a little awed. He himself could do no more. Mulligan was too much for him. Too strong. Too fierce.

And then he became aware that a stoutish, elderly, prosperous looking man, red faced, clean shaven, wearing evening clothes with a white shirt front and a panama hat, was holding him by one arm and speaking to him.

"A friend of yours, may I ask?" He nodded toward the mate.

"Yes," said Mr. Cooper. He frowned and tried to think. "Was it you who saved me from falling? I'm much obliged, I'm sure!"

"Don't mention it, please! Might I ask your friend's name?"

Mr. Cooper freed his arm. He resented the stout, elderly stranger's question, just as he resented the presence of a group of grinning spectators, but there was something in his voice and manner and look that almost compelled him to give an answer.

"His name's Clarke," he said.

"Clarke!" said the stout man. He looked, so Mr. Cooper thought, startled and almost horrified.

The deck hand was laughing in the mate's face.

"You've tried to bluff me all the voyage. Well, then, I called your bluff last night. You climbed down, didn't you? You're no good, Mr. Clarke! You're a coward! You talk big an' that's all. An' why? I'll tell yer. You daren't! You're yeller!"

Mr. Cooper heard the stout, elderly gentleman by his side gasp.

The mate and the big deck hand continued to stare at each other, as though neither dared withdraw his eyes.

The deck hand chuckled.

"You're goin' to prove yerself a better man than me, are yer? You can't! Not you! We're not at sea now, Mister! You picked on me from the start, didn't yer? You were mate, I was a poor —— A. B. You had the power, didn't you? Or you thought you had! I've got it now. You know it, too! Without layin' a hand on yer, I've smashed yer. Why, that mis'rable little second engineer's got more guts an' grit in him than you have, an' he's nothin' to boast about, whether or no. But you; I've

smashed yer! See! Now, jus' you wait, Mister—I'll prove it. Look here!"

Mulligan extended a knobby forefinger and prodded Mr. Clarke on the chin.

"You see! That's what I think o' yer! You've done yer best to make life —— for me, ain't yer? Now, mebbe, I'm makin' life —— for you. I'm showin' you up! I've seen through yer, Mr. Clarke, an' I've got your goat!"

There was an expression of agony in the mate's face: his teeth covered his lower lip: he said nothing but did not give way.

Mulligan, puzzled it seemed by the mate's continued inactivity, went on:

"You're no good, Mr. Clarke! You're a yeller coward! I'd rather be that little pukin' sky pilot in the Mission than I'd be you, Mister, a thousand times! D'jer get me?"

He prodded the mate in the stomach.

The mate continued to stare straight at him.

The second engineer had a lump in his throat.

Not only was the mate a friend, he was a shipmate. Mulligan was trying to break him before strangers; he was making him look small. He was torturing him.

HE WOULDN'T allow him! He mustn't! It wasn't decent.

The mate to be humiliated by a half-drunk deck hand!

He said:

"Mr. Clarke, let's get out o' here! What's the use of stopping and arguing with a man like that?"

Mulligan snarled out of the side of his mouth.

"Shut up, you, d'jer hear! Mr. Clarke, you stop where you are!" He laid hold of his arm. "Mr. Clark, I want you to hit me. Hit me as hard as you can! Go on! I'll let you."

His eyes danced with excitement; he grinned; he shook the mate's arm.

"Go on, mister! Hit me!"

And then he swore.

"—— it! Didn't I know it? Didn't I say so? You daren't hit me!"

The stout, elderly, red faced gentleman said in a kind of low drawl:

"I bet he dare!"

The mate turned his head and looked at him, his face a blank.

The stout elderly gentleman said—

"Well, Clarke, how are you?"

The mate said hoarsely—

"Aren't you making a mistake?"

"No," said the stout gentleman, "I'm not. You know I'm not!"

"You're making a mistake!" repeated the mate.

"You're the man I used to know," said the stout gentleman. "You may have forgotten me, but I haven't forgotten you!"

"No," said Mulligan, "an' I ain't surprized, neither! Who would?"

The mate walked quickly to the stout gentleman and drew him aside and whispered in his ear. He seemed to be pleading with him.

Mr. Cooper heard Mulligan speaking to him:

"Well," he said, "what is it? You touch me again, Mulligan, and you'll wish you'd never been born!"

"Spoke like a hero!" said the deck hand. "That's the stuff! Bunk! I got your number, same as I got his." He jerked his thumb in the direction of Mr. Clarke. "Same as I got Simpson's. I've got the lot o' you, eatin' out o' my hand! An' now I'm goin'!"

"Where to?" said Mr. Cooper.

"Same as I told yer, the Mission!"

"What harm has the Mission done you?"

"None. But it soon will, if that little tick gets goin', same as he wants to! What'll become of us poor, seafarin' men if he has his way an' spreads his religion so's there's nothin' to do in a place like this; no booze, no gals, nothin' but hymns an' prayers at that —— Mission o' his! See! He's another that's always interferin' with what don't concern him. I'm goin' to make Mr. Moldy Simpson know when it's best for him to get out an' stay out!"

And with that Bull Mulligan swung round and swaggered away in the direction of the Calle Salamanca and the Plaza de Julio and the Mission.

Mr. Cooper, disturbed and worried, turned to the mate. But the mate was still talking to the elderly, stout, red-faced gentleman in the shadow of the colonnade of the Palace of Justice.

"And that's how it was," he was saying. "Just that."

"More than twenty years!"

"Twenty-three," said the mate.

"Twenty-three!" The stout gentleman nodded his head. "So it is. So it is! Twenty-three years! You oughtn't to have

done it! Why didn't you stay and face things out?"

"I couldn't," said the mate. "I was sick of it! Sick of myself, sick of every one else. You see, I met his girl and his mother. That just about—well, just about finished me off."

"And you went to sea?"

"Before the mast. Ordinary seaman, then A.B. Yeh. Now, I'm mate of the *Mizen Head*. I climbed aboard through the hawse pipe, as they say, and proud of it! I'm in the running for the next command, if—if I live this down."

"Live what down?"

The mate gave a shrug of his shoulders.

"Didn't you see?"

"Man, why haven't you more sense?"

"They call me yellow."

"Yellow! And you've never shown them?"

"Never! Why should I?"

"You're doing yourself harm in every way possible! It's not fair."

The second engineer, feeling that he was listening to what he was not intended to hear, turned and hurried in the direction of the Mission. It was all very well, this meeting between the mate and his opulent looking friend, but if he stayed any longer, waiting, Mulligan and his gang would have reached the Mission and there'd be trouble.

When he arrived at the corner of the Calle Salamanca and the Plaza de Julio he saw that there were no lights burning in the Mission rooms above the corner store. He halted and gazed at the dark windows.

A sudden surge of fear swept over him.

Suppose Mulligan and his gang had visited the Mission earlier in the evening while he and the mate had been walking out to the point!

He blamed himself. He ought to have had more sense!

The old caretaker who looked after the Mission appeared in the dark doorway.

"Jones," said Mr. Cooper, "where's Mr. Simpson? Has anything happened?"

"No, sir, not that I'm aware of," said the old man. "He didn't show up tonight. He's sick, so we didn't open the Mission at all. I'm goin' now to see what's wrong with him an' ask whether he'll hold the concert tomorrer or not."

And then he stumped off down the Calle Salamanca.

Mr. Cooper, reassured, turned and went in search of the mate.

ONCE again, after another long, hot day of hard work in the engine room, Mr. Cooper stood in the Sailors' Mission near the platform and talked with the little chaplain.

He was anxious.

"There'll be trouble," he said. "I know it."

Even now the room was crowded with men from the ships held up in San Asensio by the lighterman's strike, noisy and boisterous, some of them half drunk and out of hand already.

"There'll be no trouble," said Mr. Simpson.

He seemed strangely elated; his face showed no sign of agitation or uneasiness—his eyes were calm.

"Friend," he said, "since I last saw you, two nights ago I've seen the light. Yes, I was tempted, I lost heart and courage, I became a coward!"

"But last night you were sick, surely?" said Mr. Cooper quickly.

"I was sick, yes," said Mr. Simpson.

Mr. Cooper was glad. A weight was lifted from his mind.

"I was sick, physically and mentally. A touch of malaria, Mr. Cooper, that troubled me far less than the despair that had seized me! I went down into the depths, but I fought my way up again, and I'm here once more, healed and in my right mind. Yes, Mulligan can do me no harm now."

"Mr. Simpson, listen to me; Mulligan and his friends will be here tonight. He's determined to wreck the Mission. I know that for a fact. Look at the crowd! They know as well as I do."

"Mulligan may come, friend, but he can do no harm! He can avail nothing against the might of the Lord! I've erred—erred grievously! I permitted self to enter in; fear, pride, distrust. I relied on myself, I thought of myself, I distrusted myself. I've failed, worse than ever before in my life, but now, thank God, that's ended! The way has been made plain to me. I've help that cannot fail!"

Mr. Cooper was out of his depth once more, perplexed, startled.

"Help that cannot fail," he said dully. "You mean police protection?"

He glanced doubtfully about the crowded room and wondered what the sailors and firemen present would do with the police of San Asensio if they tried to interfere with them.

"NO, MR. COOPER," said the little chaplain, "not earthly help, but prayer. I've been false to my trust, my faith, my work! In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known! If things have gone wrong in this Mission, if my thoughts are heavy with a sense of failure, the fault's mine. I lacked faith! Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he! You remember that, Mr. Cooper, do you? Also—they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion! Friend, tonight, in this room, you'll see the might of the Lord made manifest. Either Mulligan will stay away, or he'll give no trouble if he comes. He'll be taught his lesson through some chosen instrument——"

Mr. Cooper interrupted:

"Talking of instruments," he said, "what about this? I dunno one better in a tight place." He produced from his pocket a brass knuckle duster manufactured that morning in the engine room.

"No, Mr. Cooper, no!" Mr. Simpson shook his head. "I'll have no fighting! I'm afraid no longer, everything will go well with me."

Mr. Cooper frowned. The man was mad, of course! He turned away with a shrug.

To his surprize he saw the second mate and the third engineer enter the room.

He dropped limply on to one of the benches reserved for officers, set against the wall by the open floor space in front of the platform and at right angles to the other benches.

The second mate and the third engineer came and sat by his side.

He greeted them with a nod.

The third engineer said—

"Why did you slip off by yourself, Mr. Cooper, without telling us?"

He said:

"What are you two here for, eh?"

The second mate's plump face twisted into a knowing grin. He winked.

"For the same reason you're here for, o' course! There's not so much —— excitement in San Asensio that a feller's going to risk missing a riot, is he? Mulligan and his gang are going to raise Cain! And if you don't believe me, look at the mob here. When did you ever see a crowd like this at a Mission concert? They're here because they know Mulligan's coming."

"I wonder if he's arrived?" said the third engineer.

Mr. Cooper stared through the clouds of tobacco smoke at the faces but could see no trace of Mulligan.

"Seen the mate to-night?" he asked presently.

"No. He was in his berth when I came ashore. What's this I hear about Mulligan hitting him in the jaw last night?"

"It's not true, Mr. Mears, whatever you heard."

Mr. Mears again winked and chuckled.

"I was with him," said Mr. Cooper. "Mulligan didn't hit him."

The second mate didn't believe him, he knew. He believed, like every one else on board the *Mizen Head*, that Mulligan had given the mate a thrashing. And what if he did? Let him!

What earthly difference did it make what a pup like the second mate believed!

Mr. Cooper pondered.

Tonight would see the end of the strangest episode of his life. The most troublesome and the most disquieting.

When ever before had he been thrown into contact with three men so diverse in their nature as these three: The mate, Mr. Simpson, Mulligan?

The mate who was his friend was a coward, Simpson who was his friend was crazy! They had the same enemy, these two—Mulligan. Both were afraid of him. The mate let Mulligan do as he liked with him without raising a hand in his own defence. Little Simpson declared he had found all the help he needed in prayer!

Mr. Cooper was worried and restless. Why was it, he pondered, that he should take the troubles of other men so to heart? Why was it he wasn't able to look at things from a detached standpoint, but must needs mix himself up with what didn't concern him?

He was in no mood to talk. He heard against a background, as it were, of deep voices, shouts and laughter, the second mate and the third engineer talking.

"If the man's as much a coward as all that," said Mr. Mears, "it's time to get rid of him. I've said so before. But what's the good of me saying anything? I'm only a second mate. Lord! how I hate a coward!"

"How can they expect to have any discipline on board a ship, a ship like the *Mizen Head*," said the third engineer

pompously, "with a mate who don't give a —— what the hands think of him?"

"I always did think there was something —— funny about Clarke. Ever seen that queer look in his eyes? Shifty, I call it! And that's what he is; shifty, all through."

The third engineer yawned.

"Wonder when this darned concert's goin to start. I'm sick of it! It's action I craves. Action an' plenty of it! Hullo! What's his nibs yapping about now, eh?"

Mr. Simpson, so the second engineer suddenly realized, was speaking. He stood on the platform and appealed for silence.

"If you men will kindly be quiet at the back there, we're ready to begin the entertainment. The first item on our program is a song that we all know, with a rousing chorus that I want you all to sing." He held a slip of paper close to his spectacles. "The name of the song is——"

Mr. Cooper, not in the least interested in the name of the song or the concert or anything except Mulligan, turned his head.

The long room, right to the far end by the door, was jammed with men from the ships. In their faces he could see expectancy and excitement. The noise that had died down for a moment rose again.

There was a shout of, "Get on with it! Not so much jaw, you with the glass winders!"

Mr. Cooper looked once more toward the platform.

Mr. Simpson stepped down to the level of the floor. A tall, thin, nervous youngster advanced and took his seat on the piano stool. Another, stouter and with pink cheeks, stood by his side.

The pianist played a few bars and then glanced over his shoulder toward his companion.

The stout, pink-cheeked lad began to sing.

And at once the audience yelled and clapped and stamped their feet.

A hoarse voice from the end of the room bellowed—

"That's enough! Light the binnacle, boy! Get to —— out o' there—sharp!"

The music stopped.

BULL MULLIGAN strode through the narrow gangway between the wall and the benches toward the platform. He seemed, at a glance, sober, sober and vicious, his eyes were hard, his thin lips twisted into a sneer. There was a look of determination in his face. Four of the toughest deck hands of the *Mizen Head* followed him, grinning.

Mr. Simpson who had been sitting in an armchair by the platform jumped to his feet.

"Sit down, men! Sit down at once!"

"Sit down yourself!" said Bull Mulligan. "There's a song just begun!"

"Liar!" said Mulligan. "It's just ended."

He pushed Mr. Simpson roughly to one side, strode on to the platform, seized the pianist by the collar and jerked him off his stool.

The singer ducked, as though afraid of a clout on the head, and scuttled away.

The audience continued to yell and stamp their feet.

Bull Mulligan bowed and tapped his chest.

"Now, I'm in charge! D'jer see! You know me, Bull Mulligan, champion heavyweight of the Atlantic, champion heavyweight of the Pacific! What I ses goes! We're goin' to have a proper concert now with fireworks to end up with! This here Simpson person"—he waved his hand toward Mr. Simpson who stood beside him, white-faced and agitated yet trying still to smile—"this here Simpson is a washout." He turned his head and snarled. "Simpson, if you paw me that way, I'll take you down to the harbor an' drown you! Shut up, you louse!"

The second engineer of the *Mizen Head* had made up his mind, whatever happened, to say nothing, to do nothing. What business was it of his? He'd tried to tackle Mulligan twice and he'd failed. Why try again? But now, urged by some strange emotion, impossible to define, afraid for one agonized moment that little Simpson would burst into tears, he rose to his feet.

"Mulligan," he called, abandoning discretion, "what the blazes do you mean coming here like this, you —— swine!"

Mulligan glared at him with an expression of what seemed blank amazement.

"Thought I'd taught you not to interfere with me! You want to join Simpson here in a swim, eh?"

Mr. Simpson said:

"I'm not going to have you spoiling everything, Mulligan! It's not right!" He spoke quietly, but there was a note of firmness in his voice that made Mr. Cooper wonder. "It's not fair on us: it's not fair on

yourself! You're doing evil in the sight of the Lord."

What else he said was lost in the sudden crash of discords as Mulligan banged both hands down hard on the keys of the piano.

From all over the large room there came yells.

"Get busy, Mulligan!"

"Ain't there goin' to be no coffee an' buns?"

Some one in one of the back rows of benches hurled a book that skimmed Mr. Simpson's head. Another book followed and burst an electric light bulb.

"It's a —— shame!" said the second engineer.

"Almost wish now I hadn't come," said Mr. Mears. "Hadn't you better sit down Mr. Cooper? It's not safe these fellers carrying on like this—not safe at all!"

"Then why the —— don't you do something to try and stop them?" said Mr. Cooper. "You're big enough, aren't you?"

"No business of mine!" said the second mate.

Mulligan had climbed down from the platform.

"Here, you, Cooper, or whatever you call yourself! Here's where you get yours in earnest. I'm sick an' tired o' seein' you!"

"And I'm sick and tired of seeing *you!*" said Mr. Cooper. "Think I'm afraid of you, you big lump!"

Mulligan showed his teeth in a wide grin.

"Listen, will yer!" he said. "You'll pay for that, you will! You may pretend you ain't scared, but you are! So's he! Here's another that's goin' to pay." He thrust Mr. Cooper out of his way and planted himself in front of the second mate. "You're scared, too, ain't yer, Mears?"

The second mate licked his lips and said nothing. He seemed suddenly incapable of movement.

Mulligan tore the hat off his head and tossed it into the center of the room where sailors fought for it.

"Stand up!" he ordered. "Stand up, d'jer hear!"

Mr. Mears obeyed.

Mulligan smacked his face with his open palm.

"That's for you, lick-spittle!"

Mr. Mears blinked.

"You lemme alone, Mulligan! I've done nothing to you, have I?"

"You've done nothing, haven't yer? Oh! Ain't yer!"

Mulligan smacked him with his other hand, hard. Mr. Mears whimpered.

"Lemme alone!" he said.

Mulligan laughed and smacked him once more.

The noise was so great it was impossible to hear what was being said. All over the room men were yelling and screaming with laughter. Men in the front rows of benches were standing. The men at the back yelled for them to sit down and themselves stood on benches to see, while men who had been standing at the back of the room in the first place cursed these in their turn for blocking their view. A bench toppled over and fell. Two men began to fight and pummel each other with their fists. And all the while little Mr. Simpson, white-faced, sad, still trying to smile, appealed for quiet, and Mulligan, the deck hand, kept smacking the second mate's face, first with one hand and then with the other and begging him to put his fists up like a man.

But the second mate, looking dazed and sick, his plump cheeks purple, made no effort either to defend himself or to attack.

Mr. Cooper felt a profound disgust rise up and choke him. And this was the man who'd boasted what he would do to Mulligan! This was the man who'd said that Mulligan wouldn't dare do to him what he'd done to the mate!

And then he was aware of the mate himself speaking to Mulligan.

"THAT'S enough, Mulligan! You'd better go back on board ship."

As though the second mate was now of no importance Mulligan rounded on the mate belligerently.

"It's come to a show-down at last, has it!"

"It has," said the mate. "Go back on board!"

"You talk a lot o' rot, don't you, for a grown man!" Mulligan threw back his head and roared, all the while surveying the mate through half-closed eyes.

The noise had died down once more. There was an almost breathless silence.

"I'm going to knock you down," said Mulligan. "With my fists."

"Are you?" said the mate. "I think not!"

The little chaplain said in a kind of mechanical way:

"Wait on the Lord; be of good courage!"

"Mulligan," said the mate, "what benefit will it be to either of us if we fight, eh?"

"It won't be a fight; it'll be a bloody slaughter." Again Mulligan laughed. "Seems like I've struck heaven an' a crowd o' preachers! ——! what a ship! Can you beat it? The second engineer, the second mate an' you, all together! Why didn't they sign on a bunch o' real men for officers instead of pickin' up a pack o' wet-nurses in trousers? Will you take a lickin' or not?"

The mate shook his head.

"What good will that do? Be sensible, Mulligan! Where will that lead us?"

"You're a coward, Mister! That's what you are! There ain't a man in the port o' San Asensio but don't know you. Yeller Clarke, they call yer. Make no mistake. If you don't clear out o' this room in ten seconds I'll throw you out!" And then, like a referee in the ring, he began to count loudly, clearly, raising and lowering his arm at each number—

"One, two, three, four——"

There was a tense silence in the big room. Feet shuffled, but no one spoke.

The mate smiled.

"Nine," said Mulligan, "ten, an' out you go, sharp!"

The mate held up his hand as Mulligan advanced on him.

"Right! Let's cut the fooling. We'll fight!"

He began to take off his jacket.

Mulligan waved his arms in the air and screamed.

"He's goin' to fight! Listen, will yer! B'ys, he's goin' to fight! Yeller Clarke's goin' to fight!"

"Go on, Bull, knock the stuffin' out o' the stiff!"

"Rounds!" said the mate.

"What's the good o' you talkin' o' rounds?" said Mulligan. "You won't last more'n three seconds! One punch an' you're done! I'm champion, I am! I tell you; one punch! Have your —— rounds, if it pleases you—three minutes each."

"Two minutes," said the mate. "I'm not as young as I used to be!"

"Two minutes," said Mulligan. "Don't cry about it, then! One round'll be all you need. One punch, down an' out, an' then you get thrown into the harbor along of old gig-lamps an' the second engineer."

"We'll have a referee," said the mate.

"Who'll ref.?" shouted Mulligan.

A yell from perhaps a dozen men answered him.

"I will."

"Better let me," said a quiet voice. "I understand it."

Mr. Cooper turned and saw the elderly, stout, red-faced man who had spoken to the mate the night before in the Plaza de San Juan, by the colonnade of the Palace of Justice.

There came a shout from the *Mizen Head's* cook.

"Why, that's the earl! How are yer, my lord!"

The stout man snapped at him—

"That'll do! Hold your tongue!"

Mulligan grunted.

"Ain't you a friend o' Clarke's?"

"You'll say 'Mister' when you speak, Mulligan, do you hear?" said the mate.

Some one called:

"He'll give the decision against yer, Bull, sure as fate! Mind what you're doin'!"

It was this warning that, more than anything, Mr. Cooper knew, made Bull Mulligan agree that the stout, red-faced man should be referee.

"What the —— are you yelpin' about?" he said. "Give the decision against your grandmother! How can he? There won't be no decision! Knockout, in two punches! That's me!"

"What about a timekeeper?" said the stout man.

Mr. Simpson, pink in the face, his eyes gleaming behind his thick glasses, worried, undoubtedly, yet with the bearing and demeanor of a man who has faith in himself, stepped forward.

"It's against all my principles," he said, "to have anything to do with fighting, in any shape or form, but as I'm in charge here, I think—I think it would be only right for me, if I may put it like that, to hold the watch."

Bull Mulligan eyed him sourly.

"Do as you —— well please!" he said. "It ain't important, anyway, seein' there's goin to be but the one round. Hold twenty watches, if you want to, anything!"

"Gloves!" said the stout man with a little smile. "What about gloves? Are there any?"

"Bare knuckles," said Mulligan. "Bare knuckles or nothin'!"

The mate nodded and glanced at the second engineer.

"Mr. Cooper, will you be my second, please?" He frowned and seemed to be looking for some one else. He ignored the second mate who stood immediately in front of him and beckoned to the cook. "You, doctor, you're the other!"

The cook forced his way through the crowd.

"Right!" he said. "I'm with yer! Listen, that guy's a lord. I seen him in New York at fights an' I seen him in London. A lord! Think I don't know him?

"Well, I do! Hey, where can I get a pail o' water an' the loan of a towel?"

The stout man was ordering the spectators back.

"Give them room to fight, gentlemen! No crowding, please! I want you to get right back!"

"Back!" yelled the crowd. "Back! Right back!"

Pushing, yelling, scuffling, laughing, the sailors and firemen gave way till the space between the platform and the front row of benches was cleared.

The stout man said:

"Got any rope? It needn't be very thick, but we must have something to mark off the ring."

"Rope!" yelled the crowd. "Rope!"

"There's a rope in the kitchen store cupboard," said Mr. Simpson. "Will some one fetch it?"

The cook dragged up a chair.

"Mebbe we'll toss for corners, mebbe we won't! This is ours till they kick us out of it. Sit you down, Mr. Clarke, an' take it easy till you're wanted!"

THE mate called to Mulligan:

"Mulligan, get those heavy shoes of yours off. We'll fight in socks!"

Mr. Cooper roused himself from a kind of daze.

"Mr. Clarke" he said, "you don't know what you're tackling. You're a lightweight, Mulligan's a heavy! We've got to stop it!"

The referee turned and flashed a smile at Mr. Clarke.

"He's talking rubbish, isn't he?" he said.

"He's talking rubbish!" said the mate.

The cook uttered a yelp of astonishment.

"Is that straight, my lord! Is it rubbish?"

"Of course," said the referee. "But who the —— are you calling 'my lord'?"

Mr. Cooper spoke to the cook.

"What on earth are you all talking about?"

The cook laughed and patted his shoulder.

"Miracles, Mister! Miracles!"

Mr. Clarke sat with his jacket tied by the sleeves about his neck, stripped to the waist. In the glare of the electric light his mahogany colored face seemed gray under the deep tan. He looked peaked and anxious, his tongue kept moistening his lips; in his eyes there was a deep anxiety.

Mr. Cooper shivered, though the heat in the room was stifling.

The whole thing was absurd, monstrous! How could a man as light as the mate hope to avoid defeat?

"I don't know about rubbish," he said heavily, "but I'm warning you, Mr. Clarke, you're taking on more than you realize! Not only is Mulligan heavier than you, he's younger; you're forty-three, he's twenty-four. It's not doing yourself justice to go into the ring with a man his age."

The mate's thin features twisted into an uneasy grin.

"Never you mind about me, Mr. Cooper. I've taken on something and I'm going through with it!"

The cook, in his shirt-sleeves, said:

"Here, Mister, you lay back in your chair and take things easy! See? Don't talk. Rest! An' don't worry what Mulligan's goin' to do. If what that referee ses is true, an' it is true, I bet, you're worth watchin'."

Two lengths of rope crossed the width of the room from wall to wall; two short lengths of rope attached to these made the ring. There were no corner stakes.

The referee, and he also was in his shirt sleeves, stood in the center of the open space bounded by the ropes. He raised his hands high above his head and shouted in a deep voice:

"Gentlemen, unless there's some kind of order kept, there'll be no fight! Understand! Stop talking!"

AND so, before the biggest crowd ever gathered together in the Mission to Seamen at San Asensio, Mr. Clarke, the mate of the *Misen Head*, fought Bull Mulligan, the big deck hand.

The contrast in the size of the two men was reflected in their demeanor, the way they fought, their attitudes, their expressions.

Mulligan, six inches the taller of the two, longer in reach, heavier, the younger by nineteen years, sober for once, showed his teeth in a grin. His small eyes twinkled. He moved as one with no other thought in his consciousness than to dash in and finish the fight with one terrific blow. The mate seemed in comparison slow in his movements, almost sluggish, depressed and worried; desirous only of avoiding inevitable defeat as long as possible.

From the moment the stout, red-faced referee, smiling almost boyishly, happily, said "Time," Mulligan rushed.

There was no finesse, no preliminary sparring, no gauging his opponent's strength and condition. The fight was his. To batter his enemy senseless, to see him stretched on the bare boards before him, was, it seemed, from his method of attack, so easy that he need take no precautions.

"Time!"

He leapt from his chair, light-footed, and rushed. With a kind of grim ferocity he drove his left at the head, his right at the body. Had either of these two savage blows landed, the fight must have ended then and there, as he had prophesied. But by some miracle of chance, or luck—Mr. Cooper's heart beats made him catch his breath, as he watched—the blows missed. The mate tilted his head in time to avoid Mulligan's left, he made a half turn and his right skimmed his ribs. The crowd yelled. He edged clumsily to the left. Mulligan bored in, without a pause, brushed through his guard, and was on him, jabbing half arm blows at his body. The mate, obviously scared, obviously overpowered, outfought, outweighed, his mahogany face grim and set, grabbed the big man's arms and held him.

"Leggo, —— you!" Mulligan cursed him.

"Break away!" said the referee. "Break!"

They wrestled across the room. He tugged them apart.

"Mulligan," he said, "don't hit in the clinches!"

Mulligan flew at the mate at once. Again his left missed his jaw. A fraction of an inch, it seemed, and the blow would have found its mark. His right brushed the lobe of the mate's left ear; hard, vicious blows, delivered with all his strength of back and arm.

Mr. Cooper, shaking with excitement, crouched on the floor beside the cook. Spectators, also on their knees, so that those at the back could see, pressed against him. He felt sick with apprehension and anxiety. At any instant the mate would be down for the count and out—beaten! Only by some miracle had he so far escaped the punishment that must come. The fight could have but the one ending. The man he wanted to win, the man who was proving that, whatever else he was, he was no coward, would lose!

MULLIGAN followed him around the ring. ——! What a strong —— he was, drink or no drink! He bored in on him, slammed hard half-arm blows at him, jab, jab, jab, steadily, gave him no rest, left, right, left, right, like a machine; while all the while the mate gave way, blocked some of the blows, avoided others awkwardly, and tried in vain to hit the man whose big red fists pounded him.

Mulligan's grin had vanished. He was angry. The fight that should have ended in the first ten seconds persisted. Mr. Cooper could see from his expression that his pride was touched. This mate, this coward, this yeller cur, was still on his feet. He must at all costs finish him before the call of time.

The gleam of cold fury in his small eyes became an index to his thoughts.

He drove the mate into the corner opposite where Mr. Cooper and the cook knelt. The light was in the mate's face. He seemed dazzled, bewildered, at a loss. The dust rose in clouds. The deck hand led with his left at the body. The mate blocked the blow and tried to reach the deck hand's chin. The deck hand brought his right up at his jaw and shook him, sent his left in once more at the body, broke through his guard, slammed his right at the heart, his left at his face. The mate reeled back against the ropes. A man pushed him forward again.

It was all over, thought Mr. Cooper. All over!

But again the miracle!

As the deck hand's fierce right shot out, the mate ducked, hit him in the body, and slipped past him into the centre of the ring.

The deck hand, his face grim and savage, his eyes blazing, a red mark on his white ribs, wheeled.

"Time," said Mr. Simpson, and the crowd howled.

The mate dropped his hands to his sides and walked to his corner steadily and sank into the chair that the cook had thrust under the rope. He breathed deeply, his lip was cut and bleeding, otherwise he showed little sign of having lasted one whole round with Mulligan.

Mr. Cooper flapped a towel vigorously to drive a current of air into his face and hid his despondency with an effort.

"You're doing fine!" he said.

The cook was sponging the mate's body.

"Couldn't be better!" he said. "You got out the way that right o' his all right, didn't you? Keep it up, Mister! So far we've managed splendid, ain't we? You're what I call a miracle!"

"How are you feeling?" asked Mr. Cooper.

"Not too bad!" said the mate. "He's too heavy for me, really, I know."

"Mister," said the cook, "he can't last! He's been boozin' too hard to have much stamina left. You wait! Try for his wind."

Neither of the three spoke again until the referee said, "Seconds out!" and then—

"Time!"

"Mind that right o' his, Mister!" said the cook. "An' try for his wind!"

Once again the deck hand rushed. He seemed, from his look, to regard the mate's mere presence in the ring as a slight on his powers as a fighter. There must be no further waste of time. The fight must end now. The mate must be put out.

But again by some miracle of luck the mate avoided Mulligan's fierce onslaught. He kept circling around, just out of reach, it seemed, moving his head back or to the side. Once he countered with his right and was short. He hit Mulligan a glancing blow on the side of the nose. Blood trickled down over his mouth. Mulligan hit him in the body and they clinched once more. Once more the referee dragged them apart.

"Fight on!" he said.

Mulligan, to all appearance bewildered and confused, his face crimson, sprang hitting with both fists. The mate, a slight smile on his lips, staggered him by a straight arm drive with his left, slid under his arms, jabbed him twice, with left and right, and was out again, untouched.

Mr. Cooper banged the floor with his fists and screeched advice which could never have been heard in that tumult of shouting.

And by now he realized the character of the fight had changed.

Mulligan was no longer sure of himself. He was worried. His nose was bleeding. He seemed reckless. He had suffered punishment, yet was ready to take any risks, however desperate, if only he might win and win quickly. Again he rushed, wildly.

The mate took a hard drive on his right shoulder, gave way a step, avoided another drive by moving his head back, and then as Mulligan followed up hard, hit him first on the nose, then on the mouth, with left and right, then on the chin with his left.

The look of anxiety, of exasperation in Mulligan's face became fear. He was alarmed. No longer could he count on victory. No longer were the yells of applause for him only. This man, this despised mate, smaller, lighter than himself, was his equal!

The mate seemd to have become another man, so changed were his methods.

Mr. Cooper, watching each movement in delirious excitement, found himself whispering:

"Lord, but he's a fighter! Look at him. ——! Just look at him."

And in a momentary lull in the shouting the cook tugged at his arm and he heard him shrieking—

"Did you see that? Ain't he a wonder? Look at that footwork! Mulligan can't touch him!"

The round ended in a fierce rally, with both men standing up to each other and punching hard and then clinching and wrestling.

"Time!" said Mr. Simpson.

The mate dropped his hands at once, turned, and walked to his corner. He seemed no more exhausted now than at the end of the previous round. His nose was bleeding as well as his lip, on the deep brown of his face there was a bruise on the cheek bone; the white of his lean body was marred by red bruises. Yet he was, from his manner and the calm, serene look in his gray eyes, no longer troubled by any doubt, but supremely confident of himself and his ability.

Mr. Cooper, beyond speech, once more flapped his towel. The cook sponged the blood from his face and body.

"Mister," he said, "you got him goin', I do believe! Never have I seen anythin'

like it in all my born days! A miracle, that's what it is! A miracle!"

"Seconds out!" said the referee.

Mr. Cooper and the cook crawled under the rope.

"Time!"

And now it was the mate who rushed. Before Mulligan had left his corner he was on to him, hitting as fiercely as the deck hand had hit in the first round. It was difficult for the eye to follow his movements, so swift was his attack.

Before the mass of the spectators watching had grasped what was happening, before Mr. Cooper could respond to the cook's wild punch in his ribs, Mulligan was on the floor, doubled up.

The mate stood back.

The referee began to count.

"One, two, three ——"

Mulligan scrambled to his feet.

The mate rushed, hit him with his left, whipped in two hard drives with his right on the face.

Again Mulligan fell.

This time the referee counted six before he was on his feet.

He staggered toward the mate, his face plastered with blood, his eyes filled with horror and despair, his lips parted in a snarl.

The spectators yelled incessantly.

The two men fought in a fog of dust.

Mulligan was rushing again in turn, like the bull of his nickname.

The mate met him with a straight left that shook him. He came on once more. The mate's drawn back right shot forward swiftly. Mulligan's head was jerked back as the fist reached his chin. There was a crack, the noise of the impact, and Mulligan lay on his back, gazing up at the ceiling, his body and legs twitching impotently, as he tried to rise.

Deliberately the referee counted the seconds, swinging his arm up and down at each number.

"Eight, nine, ten!"

He strode toward the mate, seized his right wrist and held his arm up.

"Mr. Clarke, mate of the *Mizen Head*, wins!"

The ropes snapped as the spectators swarmed into the ring.

Mr. Cooper and the referee, the cook and Mr. Clarke were surrounded by a yelling mob.

"GOOD on yer, Mister! Good on yer!"

Deck hands and firemen of the *Mizen Head* tried to reach the mate. No longer was he despised. He had whipped Bull Mulligan, the fighter, the finest fighter going to sea. He had smashed the strongest man on the Pacific. They wanted to shake hands with him and, in their own rough fashion, to show him they were sorry they had misjudged him, had given trouble, had made life hard for him; to show, too, they were glad, perhaps, he has not done to them what he could have done, what he had done before their eyes, to Mulligan.

"Get right back!" said the referee. "All the lot of you!" His round red face was beaming. He laughed happily. "Get back, or there'll be trouble!"

The mate said:

"Where's Mulligan? You'll hurt him, you fools!"

Gradually the crowd gave way. The mate walked across the ring to where Mulligan sat in his chair, pale and exhausted.

"He's come to," said one of his seconds.

Mulligan opened his eyes, stared at the mate, and said—

"You licked me!"

The mate nodded.

"Got anything to say, Mulligan?" he said sternly.

Mulligan frowned. He seemed to be thinking.

"Yes, mister, I take it back what I said to you. I'm sorry!"

The mate grinned.

"That's all right, Mulligan. That's fine! Shake!"

They shook hands.

Mulligan said sheepishly—

"Worst hidin' I ever had in my life!"

The mate turned away.

"Got my clothes?" he said. He spoke curtly, as though all at once he was ashamed of himself. Standing in the midst of the applauding, admiring crowd, he put on his shirt, his collar and tie, and jacket. "Got my shoes?" He finished dressing in silence.

"You're not going yet?" said Mr. Cooper. "Surely!"

"I am," said the mate. "And I'd rather you didn't come with me. See you later! Good night! Good night, all!"

The crowd made way for him, clapping,

and he walked quickly, looking neither to the left nor the right, toward the door.

The spectators began to troop after him.

Mr. Cooper sighed. He wished the mate had wanted him with him. There were questions he would like to have asked.

Mulligan, deserted even by his friends, was dressing. He bent forward in his chair and laced his shoes. He rested his head on his hand and seemed exhausted.

Already the room was half empty.

Mr. Simpson and the referee were talking together by the platform. The cook stood a little apart, listening.

As Mr. Cooper reached them he heard the referee say:

"But weren't you surprized he won, then?"

"No," said Mr. Simpson, "why should I be?"

"But look at their sizes! Surely you thought that man Mulligan would beat him?"

"Friend," said Mr. Simpson, "from the moment they stood up to fight, from the moment, indeed, Mr. Clarke came into the room I knew Mulligan was beaten."

The referee grinned.

"Well, you're a better judge of a man than I thought any one, not knowing the facts, could be! This man, Mulligan, you know, had a reputation in the ring a couple of years back and would have done well, if he'd been steadier and obeyed orders."

"It makes no difference! I knew Clarke would win." The little man smiled then, and patted the stout, red-faced referee's shoulder. "Friend, I'd something up my sleeve, as it were. I'd something that was better than knowledge of form or reputation. I'd prayer."

The stout, red-faced man looked bewildered.

"Prayer!"

"Yes! I prayed that I might be helped in my trouble. Mulligan had said he was going to wreck the Mission. I prayed that the Lord would aid me. I prayed all the time they were fighting that the Lord would give strength to the weak. My prayers were answered!"

"And you think," said the stout, red faced man slowly, "that's how Mr. Clarke was able to win his fight?"

"I'm sure of it," said Mr. Simpson. "The weaker, smaller man won. David and Goliath!"

The red-faced man laughed rather diffidently.

"Mr. Simpson, I don't want to destroy your faith in prayer or anything like that, but I think I ought to tell you that the fight was a foregone conclusion before they stood up in the ring together!"

"Quite so! From the ordinary point of view, Mulligan should have won, he didn't though, because the Almighty was fighting against him."

"Mulligan should not have won! You don't know, of course, who that man was who beat him?"

Mr. Cooper said:

"The mate of the *Mizen Head*."

"I daresay. But he was more than that. He was the famous Hammer Clarke!"

"What! Hammer Clarke!" said the cook. "Gosh! An' me givin' him advice!"

"Hammer Clarke," said the referee, "undefeated in the ring; twenty years old and the next challenger for the lightweight championship of the world, and a certain winner. And that, mark you, in the days when championships were not as cheap as they are now. Twenty-three years ago that man you were watching to-night was the finest fighter that ever stepped into the ring. He was taking a risk, perhaps, fighting a man so much younger than himself, so much heavier, but—well, he had to! He asked my advice and I told him he must. I hadn't met him for twenty-three years, not since he disappeared, but I knew him directly I set eyes on him last night in that Plaza de San Juan. I'm taking a trip round the world and I reached San Asensio yesterday. I'm waiting for the mail boat!"

"I seen you often, my lord, years ago," said the cook. "I read in the paper you'd left England for six months, an' now you're here! Queer, ain't it?"

The stout, red-faced man's eyes twinkled.

"I daresay it is queer, my amiable friend! So is it queer you should call me 'my lord'!" He chuckled. "However, let's not argue. Will you smoke a cigar?"

"Thank you, my lord!" said the cook. "I'll keep it as a kind of souvenir."

"There's one thing I didn't understand," said Mr. Cooper, "why didn't Mr. Clarke challenge and win the championship?"

"He said if he did have to fight, he'd like you to know, all of you. It would, he said, explain things and you'd understand. In

his last fight he knocked his man out in the first round—a blow over the heart. I was present at the ringside and saw it. A hard left on the point, a right just over the heart. He went down for the count, poor chap, and he stayed down! Hammer had killed him. Yes, nobody's fault, an accident, but he never got over the shock. That's the story.

"Yes, gentlemen, I've backed a good many boxers in my time, I've seen every fighter of note in the past forty years, but no one finer and cleaner and better than Hammer Clarke! That was his last fight. The other man's wife—she hadn't been married above a couple of months, I believe—was almost demented. She called Hammer a murderer at the inquest and told him she'd get him. It was terribly hard on him. He wasn't to blame, of course; but he thought he was. He told the man's wife and his mother, the other man's mother, that never again would he fight or hit any one else as long as he lived. He never has. He left the ring, gave up when the world's championship was his for the taking and disappeared. To-night's the first time he ever hit a man since the night he knocked the other poor chap out and killed him. And now he's fretting because he's gone back on his word! A finer fighter never lived than Hammer Clarke. So you see, Mr. Simpson"—the stout, red faced man smiled—"though he beat Mulligan, it wasn't quite like you thought it was, was it?"

"But it was," said Mr. Simpson. "My prayers were answered!"

The stout, red-faced man gave a shrug of his shoulders and then laughed.

"Have it that way, if you like, Mr. Simpson, but remember this: You saw one of the finest boxers in the world fighting to-night."

Mr. Cooper who had listened in bewilderment found Mr. Mears, the second mate, by his side.

A sudden exultation swept over him. He said:

"I knew the mate wasn't a coward. I said so all along!"

"A coward!" said the stout, red-faced man. "Hammer Clarke! Well, tonight's proved that he's not, hasn't it?"

"Not to-night," said Mr. Cooper. "Not to-night, but the whole of the voyage. He proved he wasn't a coward by being brave enough to let us all think what we liked of him rather than go back on his word and hit Mulligan."

Mr. Simpson sighed.

"The Lord's ways are beyond our poor understanding! Maybe without my prayers Mr. Clarke wouldn't have been led to go back on his word to-night and fight to save me and my work."

"Maybe he wouldn't!" said Mr. Cooper.

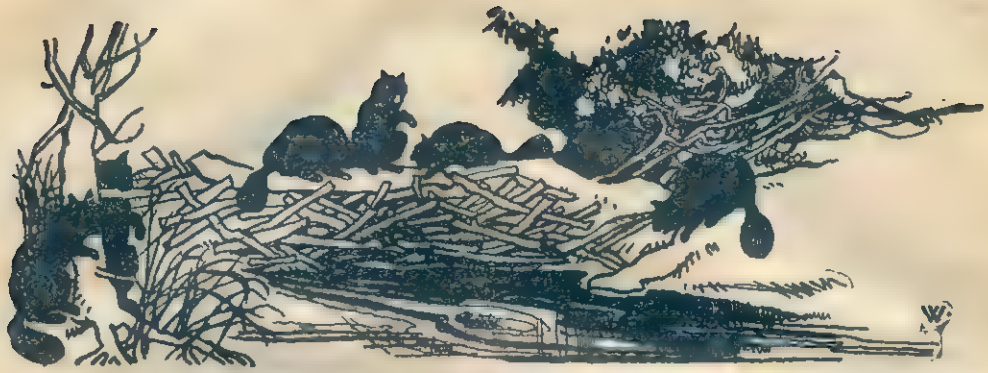
PENALTY

by C. T. Davis

OH HAD I never known of the ways that wander up and down—
Gray dust o' the long road, white spume o' the sea—
And had I never gipsied forth from paven street and town,
The peace that dwells with other men might dwell with me.

There is never a little noise of the house but wakes old hurt again—
Slat of a sail, clink of a spur, cry of a wandering bird—
And I know it is only a closing door or the beat of a bough on the pane;
But oh, it's the voice of the sea and the hills, and old things heard.

I draw the curtains and bar the door and set the lamp alight—
Night falls, and the rain drums, and a wind raves by—
And a woodfire crackles upon the hearth, friendly and warm and bright,
And I tell my heart it is good to rest—and oh, I lie!



THE TOKEN OF THE FOREST

By Stanton C. Lapham

Author of "Red Doc III," "The Unknown Quantity," etc.

WHEN the year was done in September, the month for caribou, Glenn Borden turned from the Lost River Valley, his trackless wonderland world, and journeyed south to Cameron Post.

His was the North Country, vast and silent, yet teeming with the kindly creatures of rivers, lakes and forests, who knew but little of the ruthless, destroying hand of their big, human brothers. It was a land of the cold of Arctic winters beneath blazing lights in the midnight skies, and the steady sunshine of long, northern summer days.

On the Little Beaver near a runway, Borden had cached a thousand weight of dried caribou for the stern Canadian winter.

The early hunt was completed. By canoe, up a nameless river that ran toward the Pole and across a trackless wild, he traveled the grand ways of the world's last adventuring. With the Northwest Police headquarters, one independent fur company and the Hudson Bay Company, Cameron was the center of law and trade on the farthest fringe of the Athabaska district.

Young though Glenn Borden was, men of the borderland conceded him a wilderness master, where those less gifted in nature's secrets battled disadvantageously in the limitless wild. It was the discovery in himself of an unsuspected attachment for the open and its little people, hoofed monarchs and lordly padding creatures, that had led him to purchase his remaining enlistment time and resign from the Royal Northwest Police. The captain at Fort Chipewyan knew that the scarlet-coated watchers of the trails had lost a wonderful scout and trailer when Borden hearkened to the call of adventure in the open.

The reputation of his forest skill had followed him into the new land far to the northwest, where the streams ran toward the mighty Mackenzie. For all his rare nature intuition, he found himself still bound to the world of men that was calling him in the transparent days of the early autumn.

A score of men whose forest kinship was easily distinguished by lean frames and wiry muscles, were gathered in the Antlers, the one amusement place in Cameron. A half-dozen card games were in progress. Glenn Borden was one of five players at a table. Men played much in the Antlers, gambling for amusement, rarely for gain. Cameron was far removed from the outside world, and a new face was conspicuous there. To Glen Borden, there was one player, the only stranger in the game, who impressed him queerly.

Among the visitors at the Antlers who were usually known to each other by qualities that had to do with furs, forest cunning and skill with a rifle, the border outlaw and the city gunman types were noticeably absent.

Borden seldom formed adverse opinions of men hastily, and was astonished to find himself wondering if, beneath the newcomer's suave manner, he were a professional crook, a criminal or merely a card sharp.

The game was not going well. Not that Borden greatly valued his losses. The playing was for amusement, and the thrill of losing was part of it. Money? There were things bigger than money; most anything in the North, where single-handed skill and individual courage counted most, was bigger than money. He had repeatedly, throughout the afternoon's playing, detected the stranger taking sly glances at bottom cards, and had observed the bluffing and the tricks of the card cheat.

High cards and combinations of high hands had a way of appearing all too frequently. The tricks of an ordinary gambler would have evoked only disgust, but he felt vaguely that there was something indefinably and positively criminal in the heavy-faced stranger opposite him. He constantly anticipated crookedness in the plays until the game for amusement became to him a grim contest to uncover the real character of the stranger. The instinct of the chase was strong in Borden, and he was scarcely aware of the extent to which the criminal suspect held his absorbed attention.

In the swift flight of the northern seasons, night came early, illumined by a million incandescent candles in the sky. Borden had quit the game in the afternoon under the spell of an evil impression, strangely drawn to discover who and what the new player was.

In the beginning of the game which they resumed, he set traps to catch the player in his cheating methods. Twice he had taken the bait. Not in the open; no one would have guessed. A deadly aversion toward the stranger began kindling in his mind more and more as the game progressed, until he was conscious of a warning suggestion not to continue longer in the game. Another circumstance arguing caution in the back of his mind was the presence of a blue-barreled gun beneath his right arm. He was uncomfortably conscious of the feel of the gun. He was left-handed with it. The free right and trained left had more than once proved confusing when confronting a law violator in the police service.

He played on for a time, keenly aware that there were some things utterly forbidden on the northern frontier, where straight honesty and a wholesome regard for life were never held lightly. Twice he attempted to quit the game, but good sportsmanship and the insistence of fellow players caused him to continue. After a period of indifferent playing he tilted his chair and, for a breath, gazed at the big, old-fashioned office clock on the opposite wall. The spidery hands stood at eleven o'clock and twenty-one minutes. In another nine minutes he would quit the game. It was the feel of things. He was apprehensive.

Picking up the hand dealt him, in an upward glance over the top of the cards, his quick eye caught the bare flicker of white at the level of the table. There was a flash of involuntary action as his right arm shot straight across the table, clattering a stack of poker chips to the floor. His iron hand snapped down on the wrist of the stranger. He had seen what others in the game did not suspect. In an instant his tall form towered above the players. There was a powerful upward surge of his arm, lifting the player clear off his seat and, with a sudden twist, he shook a card from his opponent's sleeve.

"You are a dirty crook." He held the fellow a moment with his eyes. The one explosive accusation accompanied his sidefling of the imprisoned hand. "Who are you? Where do you think you are?"

Borden straightened against the edge of the table, his eyes blazing, but mastered by a resentment and anger he did not suspect. His long right, palm out, remained extended as if to ward back trouble, while the left had curved to the opening of his white caribou blouse at his breast. That practiced left rested but inches from the blue-barreled gun beneath his arm. His incisive voice cut the hum of voices in the room, and there was instant hush. Eyes centered the confronting players. Borden did not stir, so intent was he on the figure backing away. What was his design?

He sensed the recklessness of the killer in his malignant eyes. It was the deadly quality he had confronted in the mad eyes of a charging grizzly.

One, two, three, four, five, even-spaced, the ticks of the big office clock on the wall sounded the half seconds strangely distinct. The backward-gliding figure suddenly brought up against a pool table a dozen feet away.

WHAT happened in detail, no two of the onlookers would have agreed upon. Particulars in the clipped action escaped slow vision. Possibly the two actors alone knew, and one of them would never tell. Borden saw the

hand of the stranger reaching swiftly behind him. But so sensitive to the movement of that reaching hand was his own practised left that, at the opening of the caribou jacket, the arm of the stranger did not flash up with a gun.

With the sharp *pang* of Borden's gun, the thick figure against the pool table jerked back from the hips as if he had received a heavy blow in the face. His right hand jerked up, then relaxed, and a billiard ball thudded heavily to the floor and rolled beneath the pool table. A scarlet stream spurted straight out from his throat at the opening of his shirt collar. He stood uncertainly, then by degrees slumped forward, bending lower and lower and, without falling, finally sprawled on the floor.

In the spell holding every man, Borden drew back his repelling right hand. He gazed in amazement at the gun in his left, and yet he was clearly aware that there was nothing unusual in the spontaneous flash of the gun to his thought of danger. Often he had killed game that way, shooting instinctively before the gun touched his shoulder. It was the automatic shot known to all experienced hunters.

A wave of unutterable regret swept him. He peered from the gun to the spread figure beyond the card table breathing quietly, the breath coming and going more and more slowly every instant, with little catches between. Yes, he recognized the lapsing intake and tired releases, checked frequently by long sighs. Much like a stricken deer, the man was going. Time without number he had watched life going that way. It was astounding that every movement of that swift-approaching quietness was only the repetition of the departing life of all creatures.

Death in the North was no trivial thing, where men kept life often at such great odds. They had seen; that is, as much as unanticipating minds had registered. They formed no judgements, not yet. The shot, red life jerking out, Borden, motionless, gun in hand and that—that which had been, but was not was tableaued before them. That was all.

In a few minutes a man got to his feet from beside the dark heap. He slowly wiped his hands, then more carefully rubbed something from the fingers of his right hand.

"No—no, he ain't got one. He wasn't heeled," he awkwardly announced. His eyes rested questioningly on Borden for a moment. "There ain't a gun on him, an' he wasn't packin' a knife neither."

The men in the Antlers could not say when or how Glenn Borden had slipped from the place when an hour later Lieutenant Bell of the Royal Northwest Police took charge. Search revealed a deck of new cards, an assortment of many things in pockets and an unsigned letter of introduction recommending Nat Kirby to the Hudson's Bay Company at Cameron. No one knew the man, or where he had come from. They discussed the queer letter of introduction.

Not a twig snapped under his soft-moccasined feet; there was no betraying motion of brush or limb—his woodcraft was too practised for that—when Glenn Borden, at noon the third day after, faced the unmapped land to the north, and glided from the vicinity of Cameron.

Lieutenant Bell and the four men in the station had made no move. They were in no hurry to pursue him; he had made sure of that. Three times that morning he had stood long, screened by dark spruces at the edge of the stumpy opening. His keen seeing had centered about the whitewashed Hudson Bay buildings and the police headquarters close beside.

For an hour, before he had left his hiding place, he had idled the time. A glance now and then for the town, amused by Indian children, playing almost at his feet. He had laughed at their droll mimicry of grown-ups, and then abruptly his low laugh was as something choking him.

Was it the sudden feel of what might go around his neck on the scaffold? That too, he had carefully thought out. There would be no scaffold for Borden of the northwest country, neither would there be hopeless years, smudged by a number and herded by rifled guards. It was the sickening disgust for the raw choking in his throat. How easily he could have avoided trouble. Quick as the spring of the northern puma, he could have throttled his opponent at one move.

Under the spell of suspicion he had flung death from under his arm as he would have killed a mad charging creature. For what? Over a few miserable dollars. But there would be no gallows. With a chill of remorse at the thought of that unmoving figure sprawled like a great spider on the floor, he had turned to the beckoning land.

Through the full afternoon and into the

night Borden held due north. He easily found his way in the white veil of light that a big early moon cast over the land. He boiled tea at one of his old camping places not far from the arm of a lake. He ate a few little squares of fat pemmican and rested beside the fire, keenly conscious that there was neither Indian nor another white man in all the land who could have covered the distance, so tirelessly had he traveled in so short a time. The open land was on his side.

By a swift understanding he had drawn conclusions. It would be ten days, possibly three weeks before the police would make the first move to locate him. It was clear to Borden that Scout Ross Freeman, whom he had known at Fort Chipewyan, was the only man of the force at Cameron who could match woodcraft with him, and Freeman he knew to be on an extended mission to the south. That accounted for the inaction of the police those first three days when he had remained within sight of the town. They would make one try to find him before storms and cold ruled the land if Freeman returned in time.

The rustle in the grass and undergrowth of the little friendly folk abroad and the splash and subdued talk of waterfowl in the lake came to him familiarly through the night. He wondered what Ross Freeman would think when told that Glenn Borden was a killer—it was an ugly word—and his man to get.

In blanket and light caribou robe, he watched the golden rim of the early moon disappear and the stars come bright. Step by step he reviewed every move he would make during the immediate days. He had become a living coordinating part of the land he loved. Find him in a million square miles of wilderness? As long as he cared to, he could live in the forest as he had before. He was assured that Freeman would fail unless—unless——

The thought was disquieting; it jerked him wide-eyed, unless he should voluntarily surrender and return to Cameron to pay down for his folly. He dismissed the impossible suggestion, and slept.

THE folk of the forest were abroad early, and Borden wakened to the raucous tumult of a jay, inspecting him from a bough and the chattering of a red squirrel a few feet away, making friendly overtures from a down spruce. The morning sparkled with life, and the vigor of a land where the blood tingles to the frost-sting in the clear air.

This was his world and he thrilled to the companionship of his surroundings. Imagination peopled the woods with many friends and gave a thousand happy tongues to a voiceless land. In those first wakening hours, that dark impending thing he was fleeing cast no shadow on his spacious world.

Only once, nearing the close of that first full day of his flight northward, was he disturbed by the fatal significance of the scarlet deed that drove the first plunderer of human life, marked by his crime, into the wilderness. With the certainty and swiftness of the wolf he had crossed valleys and forests, avoiding lakes and the high ridges. Mid-afternoon he sighted a dark, solitary pinnacle, a sentinel peak on the crest of the western range. The impulse was only a whim, to be sure; a mere fancy.

He caught his bearings for a moment from the landmark, and then plunged into the woods ten miles out of his course. In an unknown valley he had discovered a narrow string of lakes with great beaver ponds and a multitude of colonies. The furs of the hidden-away valley would yield a fortune, yet he had found increasing pleasure in protecting the harmless folk of Beaver City. It had not been difficult to make friends with them. He would visit these paddle-tailed, sprightly friends again, just to laugh at their antics, whistle them to him and wonder at their quick recollection of their big man friend.

Resting on the end of a broad, mud-plastered beaver dam, after making camp nearby, Borden grew strangely conscious of a great sympathy for the queer people of the ponds. How quickly they had responded to friendliness. They should never be trapped if he could prevent. What right had human beings to exterminate them? He detested the thought of the ruthless destruction of such creatures. Had they no rights to life and happiness that men ought to respect? Then, like a clap, he was smitten. What right, indeed? What right had he, a killer, to moralize on the inviolability of life? He felt his own red deed staining the clean world about him.

The pleasure of the hour was turned to bitterness and regret. The glow of friendliness went out. He felt his crime crowding him out of his happy world. He fled into

the night, traveling long and hard beneath the burnished sky, bent on purging his soul of dark remorse. He comprehended the moods of the forest. Was the very land judging him?

During the miracle days of the late northern autumn he swiftly executed his carefully thought out plans. There was a cabin on a stream to the east that Ross Freeman and possibly others of the Northwest force might discover. The place should appear forsaken, not vacated. Meanwhile he would be far to the west and north on an unknown rib of the range. He packed equipment and supplies to his new home, high beneath a sheltering lava cap, with a sweeping outlook upon a hundred miles of forests, ridges, lakes and streams.

When he had finished his work, there was no mark of his going on moss or leaf, more than the path left by the wild geese who had scuttled south through the autumn sky.

Moose and caribou were herding. The painted hills and valleys, and all life yielded to the whispering of winter. He visited a beaver dam to examine their progress in thickening walls and anchoring willows for food; he read other signs of the forest people, telling him that the first "big cold" would come late this season.

Yes, Freeman would have some time before the storms for the game of hide and seek he would try to play. Borden knew well every trick of man hunting. Freeman would fail. Then in the midst of his self-sufficiency, in a single night, something he could not identify began to work in his spacious land. Or was it in himself that the tragic change was taking place?

For a day he busied himself about his new dwelling in the shelter of the cliffs, vainly struggling to free himself of a sensation of loneliness, a touch of the solitude of soul that breeds insanity in uninhabited places. At first it was an uneasiness he could not place. In all the days of his woods life, the land had wrapped him softly, but now he was lonely, and every pang of the forsaken was his.

The sky became a hostile thing, the very trees seemed changed and the little creatures did not speak. The bigness of his world no longer thrilled, but oppressed him. He was afraid; afraid of what? He knew not. A thousand voices that had called him to look upon the glory of God by night and day, were dumb. There was no glory of night and day; only unendurable silence.

Two days and nights he was driven to the open. Every moment he felt the land was repudiating him for his violation of life. The land was beating him. One night as he gazed upon brassy stars that refused to shine for him, that first repellent thought came again. It twisted into his mind to remain. He would return to Cameron.

He began moving southward, and the following night built a lean-to among the twisted pines in the lee of the last ridge of the range, overlooking the flat lands. The nights were freezing and the dark skies seemed frowning with the pent fury of the first big storm, long restrained.

He awoke with the dawn. Was it the world of the devil or of God that he looked out upon from the heights? It was as if the land had suddenly heard the gurgling catching in the throat of the dying and, astounded at the empty, red-stained thing on the floor, was forcing him back.

He had no eyes for the panorama where once every form and tint had been to him as the fine face of a friend. Gazing far across the timbered valley, too distant for ordinary vision, his sight came to rest upon the merest trace of a white vapor rising above the green of the forest.

There was no waterfall at that point in the Lost River. For a time he inspected the clinging vapor above the river, then watched it dissolve, leaving a stain against the sky, that he knew to be smoke. Ross Freeman was there. It was as if he had seen Freeman, nosing the ground like a trailing dog. He began making his way across the valley, and found relief from his sense of bitter loss and regret, practising his wonderful skill, searching for marks on earth and leaf that not even Ross Freeman could conceal from him.

That night he built his fire where a single traveler had camped. He read the story of Freeman's searchings through another day of growing chill and the whine of impending storm. He wondered why Freeman did not heed the mutterings of the "big storm" and seek shelter or hurry south?

THE next was a day of bitter cold and of swirling, charging blasts from the north, beating in the tops of the bowing trees. He had followed Freeman closely, from vantage points observing his woodcraft and comprehending the difficulties of his search. There would

be short time to hide from the antagonist who would soon test the strength of life in the open and lock up every source of food supply.

The flashing streamers of the aurora had dissolved and the stars were going out when Glenn Borden glided into the camp of his pursuer. He knew the mood of the coming storm. There would be little time to find shelter and prepare for a siege. He kindled the fire, and for a time watched the scudding clouds in the long, cheerless dawn. Not until day did the muffled figure in the shelter of the lean-to stir. There was a long moment of recognition, when the officer raised on an elbow, with the apparition of his man waiting by the fire.

"Come, come, Ross. It looks as if we were starting too late to get out of this." Borden swept the ugly sky with a gesture. "We must get to shelter before that hits us," he added.

Borden read the other's confusion as he stood beyond the fire. Suddenly the lines of Freeman's face began working, he extended his hand and gripped Borden's in a clasp that conveyed the pity and wonder he did not voice. For a moment his gaze took in the six-foot-two of rugged form and every line of features that had only matured in manly strength since he had known him at Fort Chipewyan.

"Borden, Borden! My ——, man, what made you do it?" stammered Freeman. He saw the gray creeping into Borden's face. 'What made you? I mean, what made you come in here like this?" He fell silent.

"I have settled it," began Borden. "If it will do any good, they can hang me. Killing the body, what's that?" His words came slow. "Suppose, Ross, something should suddenly die, something you couldn't do without, the life of it go out. It was all mine, the free country." He circled an arm toward the darkened forest. "And now it is all gone. No, no, you can't understand. No one could understand. If the trees hated the sight of you and the stars cursed at you and you were being choked by the silence and—and crushed by the bigness of the land, then you couldn't stay out here, could you? I have been a killer, and now I have killed a man, and——"

"There, Borden. There's no use of that kind of talk," interrupted Freeman. "That's crazy talk, Glenn. That won't do you any good."

"Crazy? I was never more sane in my life. I was proud of what I could do in the woods. No man could find me. It would be easy to live in the open as I have the past three years. And now it is all a wreck and unbearable."

In the sudden blasts that flattened the fire, they went about the preparation of the morning meal, each doing the many things of competent woodsmen.

"It was like a sickness on me," resumed Borden. "I have been within calling dis tance three days. I felt better near you. It was never like that before."

Freeman was astonished at Borden's story of the ease with which he had trailed him through the cushioned woods.

In the shelter of the lean-to against a wall of rocks, with a high wind moaning through the forest, they had their first talk of the shooting.

"I had no thought of shooting him. It happened faster than you could think. You have hunted. You know how you will shoot from the hip, or your gun come to your shoulder and not know it. That's how it happened. I had been thinking all the time that he was a gunman or something. He had got on my nerves, I guess."

"It looks bad, Glenn. He wasn't armed, not even a knife on him."

"That's the queer part of it. I thought he was going to draw. It is sure strange that he wasn't armed."

"What do you mean by strange? Why should a man pack a gun or a knife about town?"

"It was just the feel of things," Borden shrugged. "I can't help but feel that it was strange that he wasn't armed." He threw out a protesting palm. "There was cold murder in his eyes. That's all I know."

He cut his staccatoed sentences searching the malignant sky. He recognized the pause in the air, the crouching, gathering might before the rush of the blizzard.

"You were going light," Borden glanced significantly at Freeman's scraps of food. "Too light. The blizzard will catch us. It may take weeks for a big, early storm to blow itself out. I figured that you would turn south or go on a hunt the first day I struck your trail. I haven't enough to keep us more than a few days."

"Didn't think it would strike so soon."

Freeman's permanent cache was a hundred miles south, at Big Portage. He had

planned to back-track at once, depending on small game as he traveled.

They set swiftly about the construction of a strong lean-to of poles and logs against the rocks where Freeman had made his shelter for the night. They had no illusions about the frozen wrath that would soon search the land. It was a hundred yards to the timber, and there was fuel to be dragged up. While Freeman scoured the vicinity for dry wood Borden hunted along the foot of the ridge in the gale and through the timber in a vain attempt to add even a rabbit to their scanty supply of food. Every sign of life seemed to have vanished.

The Great Bear and the flashing borealis went out that night, and an enormous violence took possession and began flinging things about. Powdery snow particles filled the air to suffocation. The lean-to only partly excluded the driving frost that bit into their lungs with every breath. The fire was the object of their unremitting care. Thirty-six hours was an unbroken nightmare. Repeatedly, Borden's instinct of direction and experience saved them from freezing and from being buried in the drifts that swept and piled about them. They fought every moment with the elements; their bodies demanding added fuel in the contest.

On the fourth night the peak of the storm seemed smiting them. There were a million snapping, crashing cries of distress from the forest, and then the storm lulled for a time. Once Borden speculated on the chance of reaching his caribou cache on the Little Beaver, but the venture seemed suicidal. In the morning the blizzard descended again, the frightfulness of its mood somewhat moderated. They knew that white death for the forest creatures would soon stalk in the land.

In the succeeding days, with hunger gnawing his vitals, Borden opened more and more of his inner life, his fine world of living imagination, and Ross Freeman glimpsed his humaneness toward all living things.

THREE desolate days without food, Freeman had been compelled to remain most of the time in his blankets. The fellowship of suffering drew them close. Borden had constructed a crude pair of webs, and in the steady roar of the storm, bellowing down from the ridge, came staggering in with a dry spruce. His face was blistered and eyelids frosted together.

"We'll have days of it. No sign of a letup," he replied to Freeman's usual inquiry.

"There's a thing I've got to say," began Freeman. "Might as well say it now. Maybe I can't after a while. You'll be here when I am gone if this don't moderate. I'm feeling sick. It's the cold or something. It sounds foolish to talk this way, but the storm is getting into my bones, and I feel shaky inside, and there's another thing worrying me."

He did not look up.

"What's the trouble? We'll stick her through." Borden dashed the frost from his reddened eyes. "Come through, of course we will. Just cheer up, that's the thing to do. Ross, you don't know what a tough old beast I have gotten to be. I could starve for a month like a wolf and then be strong to hunt a bit of meat when the storm quits. Don't worry. That's the worst thing you can do, worry."

He was wholly unconscious of anything heroic in forcing the largest share of food, even the last crumbs, upon Freeman, giving him his untiring strength and superb courage, and compelling him to remain in his blankets while he struggled in the screaming blasts to supply their fire.

"Not that, Glenn. There are other things bigger than just living. If this is the last camp, it's all right. I have been in the north too long to be afraid of going out. It is you and your trouble."

Borden comprehended.

"You have got your duty to the law and a bigger duty to yourself. Don't worry about me. And Ross, if the blizzard doesn't show signs of quitting tonight, I have a plan that may pull us through if I can work it."

"I have thought it out. I don't understand what you mean when you call yourself a killer. You have saved my life. I would have gone in the storm if you hadn't come in. You know that. And now I couldn't make one trip out there for wood. Let somebody else go in to Cameron with you, I won't. How can I?"

"It is fine to say all that, but I haven't an alibi. I had no business to be carrying a gun. It came to me plain enough that afternoon, not to keep a gun on me."

"You must go away, Glenn, if we ever get through this. Go away. They'll hang you, and that will be another killing.

Oh! I'm sick of the whole business. I'll never help lead a man like you to the gallows, law or no law." His hollow eyes gleamed beseechingly at his astonished companion. "God knows that there are few enough men who care for the beauty of the woods or for God's creatures or for men or anything but greed and getting. I can't do it." He was pleading. "You'd die right here to save me, and—and me going in there to help hang you. I can't do that."

After a while Borden spoke.

"I hate the thought of taking life, but it has come too late. It is the thought of shooting things. It's the kill idea that makes men do it. We think kill, and then some time a man just does it. It has caught me now, and I am going to pay." He listened a space to the full rage of the storm, pounding beyond the angle of the rocks. "There is no other way. Even the woods won't have me."

When darkness shut in with cold and starvation, the hour of a mighy fight was on them. Borden remained steadfast in his purpose to return to Cameron, and Freeman dismayed by conflicting emotions, pleaded with him to go away as soon as possible. Freeman kept the fire the first part of that night. He was weak and ill, and slept fitfully while Borden stood watch after midnight.

Along toward morning Freeman was aroused by the piercing cold. It was black in the lean-to, and the fire had burned to coals. Stumbling toward the fire, in a moment he realized that he was alone. Surely Borden could not have gone far. It was death out there in the path of the storm.

An hour after daybreak, when Borden had not returned, Freeman began shouting his name into the storm, but as the day advanced he was possessed with the thought that Borden might have sensed the end of the storm and had left. He suffered less from hunger but was compelled to fight off a growing drowsiness that would have meant quick death.

By the third day after Borden's disappearance he was too weakened to trust himself a moment in the clutch of the wind. He was digging out limbs from the heap of wood Borden had provided, when he was startled by a dull shout and Glenn Borden, like a great snow genie, came plunging and sliding down the piles of snow on his webs, to the entrance of the camp.

His face was grotesque, in a halo of frost and ice that had gathered on the wolf tail about the parka hood. Peeling out of a full pack, alternately beating the frost out of his garments and wringing Freeman's hand, he voiced his gladness at finding him safe. It was but moments until Freeman, dazed by the cold and half famished, was gulping hot tea, and tearing at a piece of dried whitefish like a starving malemiut.

It was fifty miles to Borden's cache on the Little Beaver. Freeman had witnessed marvelous feats of woodcraft and endurance from Chipewyan to the Hudson Bay, and knew the brave stories of undertakings through storms when the hunger wolf stalked in the land, but this exploit left him dumb. With no sun to guide by day or stars in the twenty hours of blackness that was night, Borden, hunger-weakened, had fought the blizzard without harm. But more astonishing, if possible, than his heroic combat, his instinct of direction and the swift swing of his powerful legs, was the new spirit that was in him.

In some inscrutable way he had been born anew in the storm. He had gone out discouraged, the taking of a fellow man's life on him like the spot of death. He had returned in the strength of his love of his wonderland world.

"It was a great fight, and all the land was on my side."

There was no mistaking the exultant ring in his voice. He recounted how the steady gale had carried him true on his course and how the freak cross-currents had helped him on the return.

"Isn't it great?"

He swung an arm toward the storm-flayed forest.

"Why what? What is great? You don't mean that?" Freeman shuddered at the twisting, hissing storm. "It is raging hell, and it nearly got us. Great?"

"Yes the storm. It is great like a mountain, like the sea. It is might, like the sweep of worlds through the sky, and Ross, listen: It is my friend again. I went out afraid. Do you know what it is to have fear every moment washing the red out of your blood, every drop of the red? Fear driving hope and all the man out of you? As you slept I went into the storm, afraid to face my mistake like a man. I was going back because the land wouldn't have me.

"Out in the storm I made a promise. It was a thing I have thought of often, but it

came to me clear and I received a token. It is the Token of the Forest, and I am going back because I will to go back. I believe that whatever happens at Cameron will be right."

He read incredulity in Freeman's face.

"My friend, a strange thing happened to me out there. I know that it sounds queer, but it is what the forest would have me do, and I promised. I ought never to have left Cameron. A man can't run away from himself. When we are there, I'll tell you all of it."

HE WAS tired, very tired. He thawed frozen spots on his cheeks with snow and then slept eighteen hours. Freeman kept the fire, hourly replenishing his wasted strength with small quantities of dried meat and black tea.

It was midnight of the fourth day after Borden's return when the sky cleared and the stars came eagerly out. The aurora, green, fire-opal, crimson, burst into a thousand penciled lights in the sky. The sudden hush over the land startled the prisoners in the lean-to.

In the morning they faced two hundred miles of frozen wilderness. The great storm had swept the snow into heaps, and where the forest was thick, it lay light and deep. Once, after an empty hour, before leaving the camp, Freeman spoke again.

"Glenn, you haven't a chance. Not the shred of a chance in the courts. I think you know it, and I wonder if you care. Sometimes I believe you are a bit off with this talk about the storm and the woods. Maybe the storm did help you. God only knows, I can't see it. Perhaps men do hear voices, but I think they are only listening to themselves. You came and gave me back my life, I can understand that."

Borden stood fastening his parka at the throat, they were ready to start.

"I have come to see some things clear as a dream, Ross. I have been an eager killer. I know the feel of killing. The passion to take life."

He held his smoking breath.

"What are you saying?" The other stood aghast. "Is that the reason you came north?"

"Killing. My hands red. Killing in my eyes, in my heart. I know the feel," he continued, "just to destroy that most wonderful of all things, life."

It was the self accusation of a strong fearless mind, rather than the confession of a conscience-cursed criminal.

"I am going to take what is coming to me."

For a day the whiplash of a storm hit them, and they laid over at Big Portage, a hundred miles from Cameron.

Living things began moving everywhere. From time to time they read the story of tragedy in the snow, overtaking the creature-people of the forest in the strife of the storm. Beady eyes alone, betrayed ptarmigan on the snow. Caribou and moose were a dull gray, or were so rimmed with frost that they appeared great ghosts down the forest aisles.

They reached the out-fringe of civilization following for miles the shadow of a single sled trail, made before the storm.

It was beyond noon when they rounded a point in the timber on the frozen trail and saw, mirage-like against the green band of the forest beyond, squares of log houses, the Hudson Bay Factory and the piercing flagpole before the Royal Police headquarters, their first impression of human life and activity.

Borden halted as if the sight of the tall mast had born in on him a vision of prison walls or that other strangling, shuddering thing. His keen gaze swept the limitless freedom to the north which he was leaving, possibly, for the last time, and then he resumed the short gliding swing of the northern trailer.

The silence of the grave lay on the Post as they entered. Trappers were on their lines and the trailers were abroad again. It was a frozen day, when even the malemiuts curled in the snow only lifted their heads, sending up smoking breaths as Borden and Freeman passed, then quickly tucked their frosty muzzles beneath their great, wolf tails.

They found Lieutenant Bell in his quarters. The big early storm had been the most disastrous in his experience in the north country, and he was relieved at their escape. There was something more than a formal welcome in the lieutenant's sympathetic attitude toward Borden. He ordered hot tea, the North's ambrosia for all gala occasions, and explained that he was preparing to send Indian trailers into the northwest country for them.

They had whipped the ice from their

garments, the lieutenant recounting the big storm's toll of life.

"There is no use making so much of it," Borden protested when Freeman had described his voluntary and timely appearance at the camp that had saved him from the blizzard, and Borden's wonderful fight through the storm to keep them from starving.

"I am not expecting any favors for what I couldn't help but do. It's no credit to me that I am here. A man doesn't know what he might do when he steps too far. It is easy to think killing and to see life go out like a lamp," he ignored the officer's attempt to speak. "And then he does something he can never undo. It sounds foolish, I know, but I did hear a voice in the storm. I gave my word and I am going to square myself for killing——"

The lieutenant had signed him to silence.

"Wait," interrupted the officer, "in another day, I would have had trailers searching for both of you, and there's the reason." He extended a long envelope toward the wondering Borden. "Read it. It came in by the first mail team yesterday."

The document that Borden unfolded bore the impress of the government. He read the body of the communication. It was an offer of one thousand dollars reward for the taking of one Nat Kirby, alias, "Two-Spot Hogan," dead or alive. He was described as a confirmed criminal and ex-convict, wanted for highway robbery and murder.

Two weeks after Ross Freeman had been sent north in search of Borden, the lieutenant explained, an Indian had discovered two guns, a sheath knife, and a thousand dollars in currency cached in the dirt floor of the cabin where the highwayman had been sleeping.

"I couldn't understand his being unarmed that day," was Borden's single comment.

It was early night with the silvery veil of the aurora folding and shimmering above the white land, when Glenn Borden and Ross Freeman faced each other across the table in Freeman's log cabin.

"The token? Yes, Ross, I am coming to that. But no man should carry a gun. It suggests shoot. It means shoot. It keeps the kill idea uppermost, any man knows that. Now I am more certain of the sign, the voice. I will always believe that I did hear it.

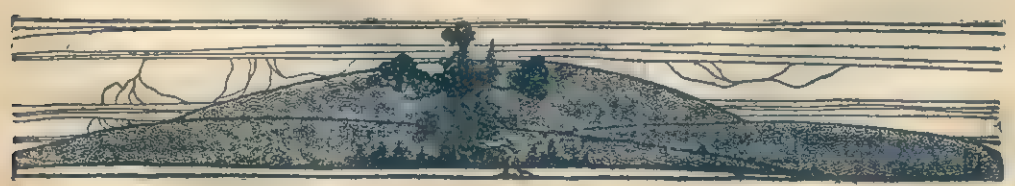
"The morning I left you in the lean-to, I waited for daylight in the edge of the timber. When it was light and I had traveled down the wind less than a half mile, I caught the form of a deer through the storm. He was close. A fine buck, standing in the thick shelter of a low-slung spruce. Before I could think, the rifle was to my face.

"With the pressure of a finger the deer would have died with a bullet through his heart. Then it came, a voice slow and distinct above the storm—

" 'You are a killer!'

"I glanced around. There was only the woods. I felt the guilt of the damned. I was about to kill again. I glanced through the sights again. We needed the meat. Then the deer seemed to me to have as much right to life as we do. Hunting things, killing, taking a life, was there no other way to live? It flashed before me.

"I don't know how it came about, but I promised myself, the forest, that beautiful creature looking full at me unafraid, that I would never take life again. It seemed that the forest was telling me that I would win back with food from the cache if I did not shoot. I lowered the rifle, and in that moment the land was my friend again. I knew the storm would not hurt me, and from that moment I was given courage to face this terrible mistake. I will never kill again, not anything. For me it is the Token of the Forest."



Plants on LIFE

THE SEA CALL

by Bill Adams

A LAD of eighteen has taken to writing to me, most appealing letters—letters of a boy who has a great soul wakening within his growing body. He longs to be up and away to sea; having a deep taste for the open waters and for ships. He draws pictures of ships on all his letters, and draws them well and, with a pretty touch of boyish pride, writes beneath the sketches "from memory."

He has a job, and one that pays well, and is not too hard work. It palls him. I can understand that exceedingly well; but his parents do not, nor can, and he is, evidently, their despair. So you see that I am in what might be a difficult position, with the lad saying that he wants a real *friend*.

I do not like to think of youth's ardent longings curbed, provided that they be honest longings. There is too little spirit of adventure amongst the boys I see about me these days. Too many seem to wish no more delectable life than that of serving behind a counter—waiting subserviently on their fellow men. I was brought up where most boys had some desire for piracy. I feel a severe responsibility in writing to this lad. He reads my sea-hungry verse, and my erratic tales, and remembers them, and makes most delightful remarks.

"I want to develop my character. I think I need it."

"I would like to be very strong and manly."

There are altogether too many leaders of our boyhood today who do little but develop a sissyfied form of what it pleases them to call religion. There is nothing so unselfish as real manhood; nothing more near akin to the minds of the great prophets whose lives were simple and whose souls courageous. It is a fine fact, quite undeniable in the light of my experience, that there are few, if any, men whose minds are not open, and indeed eager for what is really the right thing.

I was recalling, as dawn crept through my little window this morning, an evening at sea very many years ago. I was in the springing flower of my young manhood, and excellently strong; loving my limb power and the life I led, despite this latter's hardness and not infrequent monotony. We were bound for Europe, from this Pacific coast. I had, on the outward passage, been a bit of a young roughneck—nothing very terrible, but just a hearty curser, and given to those cheerful and unthinking blasphemies that many boys and men drop into often. It was a sort of foam on life's ale; a sign of in-held and perhaps unguided virility.

In a foreign port I had lost a very dear shipmate and it had a somewhat sobering effect on me. He, like myself, had always been an ordinary and healthy man. I loved him with that bright love that young men have for one another; one of the best things on earth, and a thing not much spoken of, because, I believe, it is one of our most sacred, and, perhaps, too rare affections. We had spent many and many a long night-watch alone together beneath the deep skies of mid-ocean. He was a deal older than I, and I looked up to him, wishing I might have his unshakable laugh in the face of adverse things. He seemed to glory in distress; laughing at all hardship and songfully defiant of the earth's elemental wraths.

On the way homeward I toned down my rough ways. I was not "converted," or any such thing; but thoughtful, having one afternoon visited my pal in hospital to find him on his knees. We had never discussed the thing called religion together, I think. Our talk was given more to ships, seamanship, sea disasters and sea rescues—to discussing foreign places, queer habits of humanity, and the ways of girls. He had been eleven years at sea, I but two or three. The very things we discussed might have been, in a way, described as our religion—for man's life *should* be his religion; his devotion given boldly to it, it seems to me. One needs neither church nor book nor teacher to come near to the strange and inexplicable presence of that something, the presence of which all humanity is aware of to some extent.

On the homeward run we had a man to replace him, an officer to take his place; for while he was an officer, I was but an

apprentice. This fellow who replaced my chum was, I think, as low-minded a man as any I have ever met. He was a short, pudgy, coarse fellow, brown-skinned, and hunger-eyed for anything scented with evil. He had been many years a seafaring man; perhaps following the sea because, though unaware of it, her beauty influenced him for good despite himself. I do not know.

He had no morals, or such trifling ones that they did not matter as such. He was the sort of man to restrain whom laws are made and jails are built. Probably nothing else restrained him.

We became good friends, for though I did not have a great liking for him I was always one to make friends with every imaginable sort of man. I believe we are too given to choosing our friends, and should search, more than is our habit, into all men's minds; for every man has something wonderful in him if we can find it. Nothing on earth is rotten beyond repair. Rottenness perishes, allowing beauty to prosper in its place; though often it seems as though beauty is overpowered, yet I believe that flowers will ultimately grow and hide forever all dung-hills.

Too many men's minds are like hothouse plants; their so-called religion a hothouse grown product, untried in the cold or heat, the wind and dust of the wide highways of life, in life's great open fields. A man must have wide experience ere he is fit to teach, or to stand, saying, "Watch me—I can show you!" Don't you think so? I'll say that life gives *no* man such a prerogative!

I'd far rather have a son of mine come to his ideal through something of life's "sinning," than have him grow up a dustless-sandaled Pharisee.

A few days ago a man who is looked upon as one of America's great leaders of youth said to me that he did not believe and that nothing could make him believe that a man might go down to the depths of vileness and then come back, and be just as good as the man who had never fallen. I forget whether "good" was the word he used. He implied that one who had been far down might never be in the sight of God or man as fair and beautiful as the man who has never befouled himself with our common human errors.

Thereby he damned his religion, his God, himself, and all his brother-men. Humanity will win against the very uttermost odds, as a hardy and valiant flower, as a wind-beaten tree, that stands unflinching and near to the divine, on the edge of earth's snowline—ever endeavoring to ascend, inch and inch, a little nearer to the heart of light. Such a speech placed him with the Pharisees.

There are none so blind as those who attribute to themselves the power and the prerogative of judging other men. Are there?

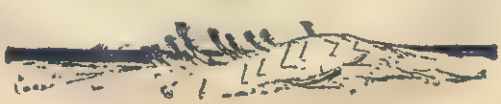
However, I digress—which is a habit I have, like an old-time sailing-ship at sea.

We had been some four months or more at sea, sailing around the South American continent, and northward toward the European shores. There was a night when things went wrong; the wind a whining devil, the sea an old black-mannered witch, the ship a shaken and distressed creature reliant upon us to save her. This little man of the sea-ports and the sea-ways was beside me, and at something going in some small way wrong where we toiled together, I let out a sudden string of oaths. I remember the night so well; the old sea-top that rose threatening toward us, and the dim shapes of shrouds and spars above our heads. I remember, too, the brown face of the sturdy little man who stared up at me, his eyes well discernible in that thickening gloom of a stormy evening, and better yet his words.

"Bill," he said, "I'm sorry you said that—I bin respectin' you all the voyage more'n any man aboard."

I still feel, as sharp as ever, the sting of that reproach.

Were I sending a son of mine to sea tomorrow I'd far rather send him in the companionship of that man who seemed so evil than in the companionship of this latter man who is, by so many, judged to be so white-minded. He would live to dream a dream nearer to the Truth for which we are all of us seeking than would any hapless lad led by the teachings of the Pharisee.



THE LAST TRAIL

By

F. St Mars

Author of "The Nameless Hunter," "Pluck's Broken Parole," etc.

"Look on my face, my name is Might-Have-Been. I am also called No More, Too Late, Farewell."

THE snow was gliding down very silently and mysteriously, imperiously imposing a universal silence, as if the Witch of the North had her finger on her lips and was whispering "Hush" while she chloroformed the world with ice and cotton-wool.

The night was trying hard to be very dark, but could not because of the ghostly glare of the snow. Yet you could not see very far—not out beyond where the snow reached on the mud-ooze of the estuary and the thin glass-like ice, since the tide went out, began; not inland beyond the sea-wall where the bent, gnarled tamarisks stood with their heads to the wind and their arms held up in front of their faces; not on either hand along the snow slope of the pebbled shore beyond.

Hst! Listen! What on earth was that?

A bark, guttural, hoarse, full of an unutterable yearning, came suddenly out of the night on the lap of the icy wind, and a form, long, low, indistinct and dark which almost unnoticed had been silently canvassing along the speckled sand of high tide line, as suddenly switched off all movement and became as still as if the cold had all at once stopped the action of its heart. But it was not that form which had barked.

The snow fell on, and a curlew somewhere out on the mud-flats called dismally, *"Cour-leep! Cour-leel"* as if it had heard the sound and involuntarily got ready to fly and to warn all other curlews hidden in the night to get ready because of it.

Then the bark came again, quite close now, only just on the other, or marsh side of the sea-wall, short, sharp, and mournful, not the bark of any dog, one felt that; felt the indescribable mystery of wildness underlying it.

And then something jumped up, appeared smudged, a deeper dark against the dark of the sky on the top of the sea-bank, and began trotting smartly up and down, whisking round at the end of its path and returning again and again with a neatness and a celerity that was characteristic.

And all the time, the long, low dark form on the high tide line remained motionless, as if petrified. And where it stood, as if it had chosen that one and only spot in the whole scene purposely, it harmonized so exactly with the snow-mottled dark line of seaweed that, unless it moved, it was entirely invisible.

At last the something jumped down, and a little vagrant, cloud-chased patch of moonlight that came hurrying along the shore caught that something and revealed it for a moment, clear as clear. It—she, was a vixen.

At the same moment another something took her place on the top of the sea-bank, and yapped. And that something was a dog fox, her lover. Far away another dog fox could be heard barking somewhere on the marsh and, at sound of it, the first fox snarled wickedly.

Then the vixen began nosing, along high tide line. She knew that the sea, who can be generous in her gifts sometimes, especially after a storm, often throws up free meals there. But this time she found something that she did not want, for suddenly she discovered herself face to face with the form, very long and low, with absurdly short, sturdy legs, a sinuous brown-black body and a flat, cruel head. It was a polecat, the weasels' and the stoats' big cousin. Doubtless he had been there on the same errand as the vixen.

Seeing that he was discovered, the polecat arched his back and, bristling, gibbered viciously. He did not trust foxes at any time, but foxes in love might be worse than usual, even. And they were.

Perhaps the vixen wanted to test her lover. Perhaps she was a little above herself. Who can tell? Anyway, with a wave of her fine brush, she crouched for attack, skirmishing as light as a rubber ball, as the polecat began to retreat towards the tamarisks. He was feeling distinctly uncomfortable.

Next moment the dog fox joined forces with the vixen and began leaping high in the air as he sprang in and out, snapping, and away again before you could wink, but he was dealing with one of the bravest beasts in all the wild, and at the fifth jump he knew it.

Striking as a snake strikes, from an arched loop to a flattened line, the polecat, whose temper is proverbially bad at the best of times, got his bite home, and when the dog fox leapt back, he took the polecat with him, pinned to his throat.

It is true that the vixen's white teeth were buried in the polecat's flank, but it would take more than that to unlock the determined long beast's hold. The vixen lost her grip as the dog fox began spinning and rolling. For the polecat bites to make his teeth meet, and she never had a chance to get it again.

Without a sound, something topped the sea-bank, stood staring for an instant and then, dropping on the shore side, drew one streaking, reddish line towards the dog fox. It was the other dog fox, he who had barked the distant answering bark, and he was not one to waste his chances.

The polecat loosed his grip and galloped away, leaving them at it, fighting like fiends. He passed the vixen on his way, and she got out of it. She was several millimeters too interested in the fight to trouble about him, and had not the slightest wish to argue with him alone, in any case.

He had gone perhaps three hundred yards, taking good care to hug the sea-bank and line of evergreen tamarisks, where were holes and twisted root and wave-made caves out of which no fox would care to turn him, when a noise, rapidly approaching him, suspended his step 'twixt rise and fall. It was a mighty noise, most alarming, there in that place with the magic of the snow and the spirit of the estuary lying heavy over all. And it was an indescribable sound. The distant ruffle of drums which a king gets on a visit, a tropic rain shower on a forest, a southwest gale thundering through an oak hangar, what you will. Anyway, it was wonderful.

The polecat cocked one eye over his shoulder on the line of retreat, then stared ahead with neck low.

It was dark in the sky at any rate, except when the moon flashed out like a searchlight. That which came through the air could be seen plainly. It was as if a barn was being hurled across the heavens, low down. A black mass, it was, travelling like the wind and with a noise like tempests gone astray. Indeed, it was a most amazing spectacle. No wonder the polecat cringed, flattened.

In a breathless breath it was upon him, roaring, whistling, dazing, above him, over him. In another breath it was gone—dwindling into the dark—the biggest, closest-packed flock of teal that ever you saw; the teal who, of course, are known as the dandy diminutive wild duck, all the world over.

IF YOU tell a naturalist that so many teal could fly together and so close-packed as that—in a huge, solid mass, bird almost touching bird—he would perhaps smile. But if you told just one or two, or it may be several only, old and experienced wildfowlers that, they would not smile; they would believe, for they know; they have seen it.

The polecat's head shot up as the whizzing rush of birds went, and he listened. Then he fetched round on his tail, almost treading on it, it seemed, and set off after them at his odd sidelong gallop. The

mighty sound of this passage had stopped, and so, he argued, must they.

Came he soon to a low, pebbly bar and a big cove, fed by an inlet through the bar beyond. The cove had many fingers, and they were rush-fringed. The cove itself was bearded with that precise marine grass which tries to conquer most estuaries, and which, not being learned, I call wild duck grass. At any rate, it is not *Zostera Marina*, I believe. All the scene was white. And all the scene, the cove, the bar and the fingers, was alive, crawling with teal.

It was at this point that the amazed polecat's mouth watered so much he had to lick his lips. But he lost not more than long enough to get the geography of the scene fixed on his brain before he got right down to business. I mean he seemed likely to sink through the snow and vanish completely. This was because, unlike some of his relations, Fate does not choose to turn polecats white in winter.

Therefore, his brown-black, nondescript uniform was conspicuous, unless indeed he chose to pose as a shadow of bush or grass or whatnot. And this was what he did do, with the result that, somehow, wonderfully, without you or I being able to notice it had we been there, without—and this was of most importance to him—the many hundreds of teal eyes noticing it, that shadow contrived to move itself one hundred and fifty yards along that bar, just below the crest on the far side, one hundred and fifty yards to the gap where low down, within an inch of the trickling water, it lay almost among the teal, without ever having given itself away as anything more than the shadow of some big stone.

Then that shadow turned back again into a polecat and shifted through half frozen slush and water, to the accompaniment of noises like treading upon glass, in less than the tick of a second hand on a watch. You have to do that with teal. Even so, they did not wait, they shot, sprang straight up as if fired from springs, and simultaneously. The polecat only just managed to grab the foot of one beautiful, gold-spectacled, red-headed little fourteen-and-a-half-inch drake, and that only by leaping his highest possible leap.

The death flutter of that drake—for the polecat can slay quickly as a trained swordsman when he likes—was drowned in the cataclysmal roar of wings that followed, and ere it had quite dissolved high away into the night sky, he and his prey were lost together among the reeds.

Together they went from sight, but not alone. As if the roar of wings—those fastest wings of all, nearly—had called it, which perhaps they had, there appeared over the edge of a dike, a flat and dark, wedge-shaped head, and eyes that, as the head turned, gleamed. Anon unto the head was added a shape, long, and so low in the snow that it seemed to be gliding on its belly. It might have been the polecat himself, but it was not so. Fate must have sent it, for it was a polecat too, and a lady of that ilk.

One year and many months our male polecat had sought for a wife, and had not found one. Polecats do not haunt every field these days; not every county. One year and some months this female polecat had hunted the wild for a mate, and never a husband could she find. But she had wandered far in the process, far even for restless beasts, far even unto the flat and wind-swept place at last, neither knowing.

And neither knew. Even if she had lifted her head above the dike five seconds earlier she might have seen at least his tail vanish. Even if he had paused just once only to look round he might, he would have seen the glint of those eyes, like wrist-watches of soldiers who make a night attack, flash above the dike. Fate gave a woggle to their lives and they did not. Within a hundred yards of each other after so long, and neither knew.

The female shape came out and hunted about along the inlet shore—she looked like an ant from afar—as if she were a hound questing. Then, a well-marked form, low across the spotless waste, she turned away, and the snow haze gradually swallowed her up.

And even as she did so, bells broke out, bells inland, inland from some low marsh church among bent, gale-tormented trees, clearly, beautifully through the silence; bells of the night. Both the beasts heard it and stood listening with flat heads up on long necks. Then the female went, and the couple that had been within a hundred yards of each other, within a hundred yards after so long, drew farther and farther apart every instant. Perhaps Fate laughed, or was it a red-throated diver crossing the night sky?

The polecat did not eat all that teal. It was his custom, a bad tribal habit indeed, to nip a little and go elsewhere. In deference to the snow, however, he took more than that. It is not quite clear whether, by the same token, he, like the mole and some others, was possessed of an astounding appetite; he certainly slew more than his share as a beast about twenty-three inches from sharp nose to bushy tail-tip.

For this reason, therefore, the polecat did not reappear immediately after the meal. He cleaned first. As a warrior specializing much in subterranean warfare, cleanliness was with him, more perhaps than most wild things, a religion. And secondly he gained, or tried to gain, some closer knowledge of a thing unknown that ran about in the reeds like a rat, but not a rat.

This thing had ruby eyes, and it was a brown wedge. When he tried to follow it, he would have sunk into the rotten ooze if he had not learned how to throw himself backward and, if the ooze had not been sheeted with thin ice that crackled atop. The thing might have been a goblin by the way it re-duplicated itself, turning up behind when it ought to have been in front, and in front when every sign proved that it must be behind, and by the way it seemed able to run almost upon the surface of the very water itself.

AT THE end of half an hour's floundering, the polecat discovered three things: Firstly, that he was wet and cold—he clinked icicles as he walked—and not so clean as he had been; secondly, that he was not nearer, indeed it seemed not so near catching that thing or goblin or whatever it was, than he was at the start; and thirdly, that he did not know from antediluvian relics which was the way out of those reeds.

In another ten minutes he had more or less got over the first problem, bar the icicles; in another ten, more by luck than good judgment, he solved the last. And the thing, which was a bird, name of water-rail, or officially *Rallus Aquaticus*, grunted gibingly after him, as if it were a bull frog, as he went. But—and this is where the shoe squeezed—that had given the female polecat fifty minutes start of him at the least, and fifty minutes may be as good as fifty hours in devious wanderings where these beasts are concerned, sometimes.

The polecat, hugging the dikes and hollows where the fingers of water crept inland to the marshes, maneuvered almost unseen, down to the shore of the inlet. He put up three lapwings—whose eyes must have been miracles of keenness—which went away, complaining shrilly to all the night. He watched seven little spidery dunlin—at least, I think they were that precise kind of shore bird—running about on the mud-ooze as if it were solid ground, and was deceived into mistaking them for wigeon duck by a yodling call that they made. He crept up to a snipe, running about in a little pan of wet, but the snipe had miracle eyes like the lapwings too, and dissolved, rasping, into the night.

Then he turned along the shore, the wrong way, the way opposite to that taken by the female. It was an exasperating thing because they were the last two living polecats in that county, and one felt now that they would never meet, and the race of polecats must be doomed to die out in that part for ever. A watcher, had there been one, would have been tempted to shout out:

"The other way, you fool. The other way."

But it was no good. The idiotic beast persisted in his course, and everything seemed all up.

And then it was that Fate took a hand in the game. If it wasn't Fate I do not know what it was.

The polecat came to a grayish post. He had seen it for some time as he ambled slowly along. It had seemed almost as if it had shone with a faintly luminous phosphorescence, but perhaps this was fancy. Anyway, the wind was blowing from him to it, so he could not know. The post, as is the custom of most posts—and there were plenty—sea-washed and tottering, about—did not move. At least, it did not move until he came to within about a yard of it. Then it did.

He heard something whiz past his eye, and dodged, if I may so put it, before he thought to. It is a way they have to get into in the wild if they desire to remain alive, acting first and thinking after. Then he was two yards away. I say was, because the dodge and the jump seemed to our eyes almost simultaneous.

Thereafter he turned and regarded that post with a light in his eyes, and found that it had turned into a heron, and he knew

that the whiz was made by its pointed beak on its coiled spring of a long neck. The heron got up and flapped heavily on great umbrella-like wings back to the place where the polecat had come from, and the polecat, after stopping, apparently, to think on the miraculous escape of his eye from the plunged, assegai beak of the heron, followed it.

I fancy, however, that he judged the heron's observation height by his own lowliness. Anyway, the long-legged bird saw him coming all the time, although it did not appear to, and when he had got nearly close enough—but it would have been risky to tackle old friend heron, anyway—flapped away into the snowy night, grating *"Cra-ank! Cra-ank!"* in a voice like the rattling of rusty dungeon chains, as it went.

And the polecat struck the trail of the lady polecat even as in his rage he made to gallop after the great bird.

For about ten seconds he seemed to have been struck by lightning.

Then he flashed to wild excitement, running that trail with something of the fury of an ant. Not, mind you, that he really appeared to be following that trail at all. Except in the hollows, he kept about forty yards to one side of it, roughly, but that was because the invisible knives, which they called wind in those parts, had blown her scent to one side for that distance.

But there was only the high pressure, nearly bursting excitement that fairly oozed out of that polecat at every stride to show the amazing change that the striking of that trail had made within him. The obvious proof of that change came when, forgetting the strict rule of hugging cover, he made to cut across the open space between one stiffly rustling, reed-choked dike and another, and met a man.

I wonder what he was up to there, that night of all nights.

That man was surprized when, without warning and for no reason that he could see, of course—how was he to know that he stood bang across that magic trail, barring the way—a long, low, dumb, dark beast slid out of the rushes and the night, and started climbing up his leg. He accused it of trying to reach his throat, which was quite likely.

Now, that man had a gun of sorts, a 14-bore double-barrel muzzle-loader, and it was loaded, but he could not fire at a beast on his leg, you see. Wherefore, he kicked and yelled, and the beast slid down his leg, and made his teeth meet in the first thing he could lay hold of. It happened to be the man's leg, and the "bites" acknowledged the fact with a howl that did more toward frightening the polecat than any action could have done.

Next moment the man had clubbed his gun, and the polecat dropped, with a thud, all consciousness knocked out of him. He came round in a second or two, being only stunned, and found himself lying with his mouth full of snow, looking up at the man skipping grotesquely ten yards away, wrestling apparently madly with his gun.

As a matter of fact, that gun, being a muzzle-loader, had taken advantage of its owner's diversion of attention for a moment when he clubbed it, to decant its caps, and without those caps, or fresh ones, fumbled for in pockets with cold fingers, it could not be fired. Breech-loaders always do that sort of thing—and half a dozen others—at critical moments, as you may have noticed.

IT SEEMS that animals hate to have things pointed at them, and it is certain they loathe man to stand still and aim. Perhaps it is too suggestive of the cat tribe about to spring. Anyway, they become all suspicion at once, and mostly they remember appointments elsewhere. And so it was with the polecat. He quitted. He could not have feared the man very much or else he would not have attacked him, but all his suspicions, never very much asleep, were aroused by that attitude of aiming, and he vanished into the reeds in the snap of a finger.

In the reeds he was rather useful because he turned out of them, quite a warm dry bed she had made against the storm, a hare. The man had found his caps by that time, and the polecat knew it. The thundering report that followed, and the squeal of the hare that followed that, told the polecat the facts and sent him the best part of a quarter of a mile almost without stopping, but he held the trail, more or less, all the same.

When the polecat did stop, it was because he had to. Caution was needed. The trail had led him to a farm, one of those long, low, crouched, thatched collections

of buildings that mark the marshland farm, where wind is always the prevailing factor in life, and shelter there is none.

The polecat did not much approve of meddling with man's works. A long and bitter experience had taught him to stick to the wilds, and the wilder the wilds, the better. But just then he would do anything to please a lady. Nevertheless there was no need to be a fool over the job, and his caution became extreme.

Selecting the moment of a wild and roaring snow flurry, he peered through the lower rails of the yard-gate, and nearly dropped in his tracks, where he stood, for a cream-coloured beast, hunched, squat, and gnome-like, was dancing, it seemed, with a snow-devil by the icicle-festooned water trough. That beast was only a rat, in fact, but in that scene, with his slit ears, stump-tail and mange-patched hide, he looked something much worse than is conveyed merely by the word rat. Moreover, there was nothing in the polecat's experience to prepare him for cream-colored rats.

Now the trail of Mrs. Polecat led to the water trough. Many trails lead to the little unfrozen water to be found on such a night. Wherefore, the polecat held to his way, flat to the snow, pressed into it almost.

As he slid between the lower gate bars the polecat was aware of three noises at once, snatches, as it were, of sound in the infernal dry howl of the wind. One was the resonant pealing of church bells again; and then another peal, of laughter in the farmhouse, back behind the farm buildings round the yard; and the other the click of the lowest bar of the gate, which was loose.

He cursed that lowest bar of the gate, for the rat spun instantly on its stump tail and sat hunched, still, silent and at attention. Perhaps that old rat knew that bar clicked. They are cunning enough for anything.

The polecat froze in his tracks, peering through the falling snow and, in a second or two, the rat gave three hops and was nowhere. That is a way rats have, but it savors of magic all the same, black magic, and evil.

The polecat crept on to the water-trough, sniffed where the rat had been, making sure that it was really a rat and not a gnome, in spite of its strange color; and the lower bar of the gate clicked.

The polecat did not spin about, top fashion, as the lesser beast had done, perhaps because he was so long. He darted his head round and looked over the dark brown curve of his own arched back. One foot he had in the air at the moment; it remained there. Except for that one screw of the head, he had not moved so much as a hair. And he found himself looking at the cream rat. At least, if it was not he, it equally was not any rat of a legitimate rat color and, if dilapidation counts for anything, it was the very same rat.

You, a human being, would have shown surprize. This citizen of the wild showed nothing behind his dark, sharp, brindled, weasely countenance. Who knows what he thought?

But the rat was looking at him, had seen that twisted head on the long neck. There was a pretty, purply light in the eyes of the polecat that had gleamed as he turned. The eyes of the rat shone steadily like tiny white-hot coals. In three seconds and five hops the rat was gone.

And the polecat took no notice, apparently. He drank a moment and continued to decipher that trail. It took all his time. It took him, too, once round that yard and into a hay bin. Here its maker had slain a mouse. It led him through a little hole in a door, officially intended for the use of cats only, into a great black echoing void that was the barn. The barn had been full of corn but, all having been sold and carted away two days before, it was now empty of corn, not other things.

A young rat, a legitimately colored brown one this time, lay on its back on the floor, barely cold, its hand-like forepaws tightly clenched. Something, possibly another rat, made scraping noises high aloft, as one who climbs, under press of a great fear, laboriously to the roof. The roof, it seemed, had many tenants, mostly awake. And as the polecat cautiously followed the trail, circling the place, he came upon first a dead wood-mouse; second a nearly dead sparrow; thirdly, fur, fur of a great whiskers and claws. He looked up and beheld it glaring down at him, eyes, eyes only, floating in space, but on a beam, really, the eyes of a cat.

"*Gr-r-r-r-r-rr! Phtt! Hurr-r-r!*" said the cat.

The polecat said nothing. Like most of the fighting breeds he was rather a silent person. He encircled the post that ran up

to the beam three times, as the owner of the trail had done, and as it led away, showing that the cat had been deemed too strongly entrenched, agreed, too, and followed it.

It took him down a hole of awful twistfulness in the floor, and here he met face to face a stoat, coming in. The stoat was a kind of cousin of his, but that made no difference. It rarely does.

The stoat grinned a horrible grin as if knowing what had to happen. Indeed there was no room for anything else. There they fought. It was a nasty, wicked little scrimmage while it lasted. Each flew at the other's throat. The scientific rapier thrust behind the base of the skull, which both used for dealing with their prey, was no good here. Do rival fishermen slay each other with hooks?

One might have expected the stoat to go down almost instantly under the direct frontal attack of the polecat, seeing that he was only about half the size of the latter; but in a nimble tribe the polecat is one of the least nimble and the stoat one of the most. The result was that the polecat's jaws closed upon a stoat that wasn't there, so to speak, and the stoat's little sharp canines upon a polecat that was. Being a polecat, and of the weasel tribe, he took the stabs of fire that proved the fact in grim silence.

AS A rule it was the stoat's custom to hang like a spanner to anything upon which he had got a hold; but not this time. He just bit, and was out of reach before the polecat got in a counter stroke. He did it again and again. You could not have followed his movements; they were snake-quick. You could not even have told what he was at, all bristled out to twice his size and swearing in the intervals. But the polecat could feel what he was at. And both animals—well, smelt to blazes, to put it bluntly; which was a tribal trick of them, something like a battleship dissolving into its own smoke-puff.

Next instant the stoat had twisted upon himself and was running for his life, the polecat hard on his heels. He shot out of the barn and across the rick-yard into the hedge where he went down, like a sounding porpoise, into a rat's hole not large enough for the polecat to follow. And the polecat, after sniffing, turned away to go back to his precious trail, and was just in time to catch a glimpse of a creamish body and a long whippy tail vanishing round a corner of the big straw-rick.

I think it gave him food for reflection, for he slipped to that corner to investigate and, as he did so, the death scream of the stoat, muffled and choked, came to his ears from the interior of the hole. They had got him down there, then, cornered and mobbed him, the ruffianly old buck rats of the place; and there must have been many, for they would never have dared to tackle the plucky little fighter else.

Again the polecat paused to reflect. There seemed to be a —— of a lot of scaly-tailed vermin hereabouts, and they were wondrous bold, too. It almost appeared as if his quick animal instinct had warned him of something sinister about the place, for he stared sharply round and, for a moment, seemed half inclined to retreat. The lure of love, however, was too strong for him, and he took the trail again, which this time led him into the cowsheds, where a great red bull, anchored and lashed like a big ship, made the noises of several grampuses and lunged at him ponderously as he passed down the line of mangers.

He turned to show his teeth to the giant—which was like his cheek—and stayed to stare amazed, for, looking ghostly and uncanny in the very last of a pale, washed-out rift of moonlight, a creamy colored rat was sitting upon the crossbeams that supported the cows' chains and yokes. It ran along and up into the vaulted darkness of the roof-arch after about ten seconds, but the polecat felt that that was only because he had seen it, and that, as a matter of fact, it had been watching him all the time. He did not say anything, of course; polecats seldom do. But as he moved on, I fancy he was thinking just about as hard as a beast like that can think.

Out of the cowsheds and into the pigsties the trail ran, and there the polecat stopped dead. There were noises in the darkness, besides the grunting and moving of pigs, noises of grim and bitter conflict and, as the polecat drew forward, step by cautious step, they grew worse; but for the life of him, he could not tell where on earth they came from. Weird forms, heard, for the most part, rather than properly seen, some dark, some ghostly, white, flitted from his path as he stole on, or stared at him

with eyes like gimlet-holes of light, from beams, from holes and unseen fastnesses.

They were the forms of rats, all the rats of the threshed corn ricks, and the barns, gathered there because starving, and I give you my word there is absolutely no knowing what starving rats will do; everything bad for certain.

These rats, however, were not fighting. The polecat was puzzled. The horrible sounds of a close-fought, bitter fight continued, and the still more horrible, ceaseless gathering of rats in every spot where he was not, continued, too.

Once a rat blundered past him in the dark, badly mauled, and he smelt the blood, and he slew. The rat squealed as his fangs closed behind its neck, and when he looked up he found himself surrounded everywhere by a ring of cruel, sharp, gleaming eyes in pairs. But when he rushed at them they vanished, only to come back when he stopped.

All the time the noise of that furious fight never ceased, and all the time, coming in from outside, he would hear the pealing of distant church bells. Man, it seemed, was happy that night, which was a good deal more than he was. This business puzzled him, and the unknown is always distasteful to a wild beast, if not terrifying.

In a lonely corner he found another rat mobbed by its fellows, but taking no notice and crooning all alone to itself in pain. Its brotherly comrades melted before the polecat as he came rippling up, but the stricken one could not face him because its head would not lift. The thing's neck was broken.

Again he slew swiftly and, as with the last, as swiftly hid the carcase away. But as he left it, he heard those eyes, the living rats, to wit, rush in upon it with a ghastly pattering, like dwarfs of hyenas. They were most undoubtedly starving and, by the same token, still more undoubtedly very dangerous, and he would have given a night's hunting to be safely out of the place. But he could not find the trail of his beloved. It stopped at the foot of a huge old-fashioned meal bin, a very giant of meal bins, and beyond that, though he had cast forward and backward and in every direction, no sniffing of his could carry it. Surely the rats could not have eaten the whole animal up. Banish the thought. She would have put up a fight of fights for one thing; and something surely, if only fur, would have been left, for another.

And still the noise of terrible combat, somewhere unseen, never ceased.

It seems never to have occurred to him up to that point, to look up. This appears to be a weakness that afflicts mammals, rarely to look up. A strange fact, too, seeing that for many of them, at any rate, their chief terror comes from above. It was the frantic scratching of claws, as if something was vainly trying to balance itself somewhere overhead, that finally forced him to lift his head, and a rat fell on top of him from over the side of the meal bin.

It was quite white, that rat, or rather creamy, except where it was red, and it was already more than half dead, bitten through the neck with two clean fang-holes, and he had no difficulty in slaying it.

But why did he slay, you ask? Why, indeed? Because he was a polecat, I suppose, which is as good an answer as any other. Why do some men arm themselves and slay? For sport? Not always. And Nature had armed the polecat, and he slew occasionally but not often, I dare to think, for sport.

SCARCELY was that rat out of action than a second incontinently tumbled upon him from above, and was despatched with clean precision and practised promptitude. Not that it would have mattered, for that rat had already two holes through his neck.

This grisly work, however, warmed the polecat up. It set his excitement alight; his blood burst aflame, and when a polecat, when any weasel, in fact, begins to get excited, to see red, things of a most hectic nature are bound to happen. They forget themselves at such times, but everything within reach gets no chance of forgetting them.

The polecat doubled his long body, on sturdy miniature bear-like legs, into a loop. He sprang. He missed, and fell sprawling. He aimed. He sprang again, and his head and forepaws appeared over the top of the side of the meal bin. For a moment he swung there, scraping. Then he climbed up top and balanced, all four feet touching. And he looked down.

His eyes, those fierce red orbs, saw a

sight, a most amazing sight down there on, and over and among and in the meal of the meal bin. It crawled, that meal. It was alive, horribly animate with things, meal colored, meal smothered things, which explained the mystery of the cream- and biscuit- and meal-colored rats, and they reared and they fought and they rolled and they burrowed and they sprang at and ran round and fell back from, and in about one case in twenty, got up over the side.

And they gibbered with hate and fear; and they squealed with loathing and pain; and they screamed in rage and death. And not all those things, though all were the same mealy color, were rats, either. One was not a rat. It looked like a ferret, a big one, parti-colored, meal-colored where it wasn't dark-brown, black and dark brown-black where it wasn't crimson.

It was fighting for its life, that thing, having got in and getting no leisure to climb out of that death-trap. So were the rats, having got in and, in the majority of cases, not being able to get out of that place. But even if the polecat had had his eyes shut he would have known the name of that other beast. Anybody who had not a cold, and it would have had to be a mighty bad one, would have known the name of that beast, too.

You could smell its name. It was written, almost, I had said, in blue, on the very air, for only a polecat could stink like that, and on purpose. It was indeed the undoubted and exclusive smell, in that land, of *Musteta putorius*, the polecat. But in one point our polecat was ahead of us, his nose told him that he could add the words, female gender, to that description, and the knowledge acted upon him like the touch of a magic hand.

With a single flying leap he arrived at the bottom of that great, big bin, unannounced and grim, and as he landed he set in to slay. Even among the choking, clinging, clogging meal he slew and fought and fought and slew, terribly, ghastlily, appallingly, for he was temporarily as mad as any hatter and blind to the world, for his trailing of a night, his quest of a year and a half had come to an end at last.

For a bit, however, it looked, to the dull human eye at any rate, as if the end was like to be of the wrong kind, and too sweeping a nature, for that great big bin was literally alive with rats—starving rats, desperate rats, cornered rats, old rogue rats, big father rats, cannibal rats, gaunt mother rats, young "K-nut" rats, lean flapper rats; decrepit—very few of these—hoary old rats, crippled rats, one or two, hobbledyhoy rats, and, yea verily, one blind rat—almost all anxious to get out, nearly all failing in the leap, and very much all desperate beyond the last shred of fear in their desperation.

As for the female polecat, she did not seem to be able to get out either; at least, not with all those rats there. She must continuously face and fight them; they would have torn her to pieces else, and she knew it. But she did not know it when she had gone in there to kill them.

Even as it was, there did not seem to have been over much sanity and no pity inside that great meal bin, which was a pitfall, no less. A fact, by the way, which the farmer well knew. But directly the male polecat broke his neutrality the whole thing seemed to go clean crazy in one whirling, boiling, tumbling, revolving, whitish cloud.

A few rats managed to get out over the side, wounded, fewer dying, and fewest of all whole. Some fell when they dropped, some crawled away to be eaten by their kind. Some rushed off in the darkness. But by far the greater number failed to make that leap good in the reeking dark, and died in the choking meal fog like, well, like rats. And that is darned hard, too.

In the end, as a storm dies, that fiendish combat died down in the bin there, and only silence and the horrible crooning, mumbling noise of a rat hard bitten and beset in a far corner, broke the fat, full, complaisant grunting of the pigs. At last even that ceased, and the pigs became as silent as they ever would be.

But no polecats appeared. No polecats ever appeared. The farmer found them next morning, surrounded by dead rats, one across the other—dead. Some of the rats that had faced them that night had already tasted poison, and that was enough.

But verily—

"Cruel is Fate, who makes, who mars, who ends."

And that is why there are no polecats in that county now, and why, too, there might have been.

EARLY KENTUCKY SPORTS

by Arthur Woodward

"SQUIRREL-barking," "driving the nail" and "shooting for beef" were among the most popular shooting pastimes among the early frontiers-men living on the border line of civilization in old "Kaintuck" and Ohio.

In squirrel-barking the marksman selected the bit of bark underneath the animal, as it rested on trunk or branch of a tree, and endeavored to hit the bark at such an angle that it would kill the squirrel by the shivering of the bark and concussion, rather than a direct hit.

Driving the nail was the usual means of testing the marksmanship of a man on the border. To do this an ordinary nail was hammered into a tree for about two-thirds its length. The distance was generally set at forty paces or one hundred and twenty feet. Powder for the charge was poured into the hand, as much as would cover a ball being considered about the right amount for any distance under one hundred yards. The barrel of the weapon was well cleaned and the ball, placed in a greased linen patch, sent home with vigorous strokes of a stout hickory "wiping stick." Provident borderers generally carried two wiping sticks in case of emergency.

A fair shot was one that struck alongside the nail, a good shot one that bent it, but the man who hit the nail plumb centre was considered an excellent marksman. Not infrequently two or three nails would be needed before half a dozen men each had one shot apiece. The winners, after the indifferent shooters had been eliminated, then tried out for high place.

In the early thirties, shooting for beef was a popular pastime. These particular shooting bees were held in late summer when the cattle were fat and the marksmen would get the most for their money.

The usual procedure was for some man who owned cattle and wished to dispose of a beef at a fair price to advertise that on such-and-such a day a first-rate beef would be shot for.

When the appointed day came around all of the marksmen in the neighborhood gathered at the designated spot and a subscription paper was passed around stating that "Mr. So-and-So offers a beef worth twenty dollars to be shot for, at twenty-five cents a shot." Then each person present who desired to compete would put down the amount of shots he desired. Each man had his own target marked with a cross in the centre as a bulls eye.

The winning shot won the hide and tallow which was considered the first choice. The next highest got his choice of the two hind quarters. The third took the remaining hind quarter. The fourth took first choice of the front quarters, the fifth the remaining quarter. The sixth man, not having any beef to choose from, was allowed all of the lead in the tree against which the targets had been placed. Occasionally some good shot would win nearly the entire beef.

In speaking of these beef shooting matches it might be of interest to state that there was a story current on the Ohio in the early days regarding the famous—or infamous—boatman, Mike Fink, who, because of his remarkable ability with a squirrel rifle was generally barred from such affairs being credited the best shot or "bang all" in the country.

However, Mike didn't let the matter rest with his exclusion. His price for keeping out of a beef shooting was the "fifth quarter" as the hide and tallow was called, in other words the first prize, which in turn he generally disposed of to the nearest tavern keeper for a gallon of fiery "Monongahela" whisky, his favorite beverage.

DAYS of '49

A Six-Part Story

Part One

"—the days of old,
The days of gold
The days of '49!"

by

Gordon Young

Author of "Pearl-Hunger," "La Rue of the 88," etc.

Foreword

"WHOEVER wants merely an eulogistic story of the glories of the pioneer life in California must not look for it in history, and whoever is too tender-souled to see any moral beauty or significance in events that involve much foolishness, drunkenness, brutality, and lust must find his innocent interests satisfied elsewhere. But whoever knows that the struggle for the best things of man is a struggle against the basest passions of man, and that every significant historical process is full of such struggles, is ready to understand the true interest of scenes amid which civilization sometimes seemed to have lapsed into semi-barbarism. It is, of course, impossible to read this history without occasionally feeling a natural horror of the crimes that for a while were so frequent; but one's horror is itself a weakness, and must give way, for the most part, to a simple realistic delight in the jovial fortitude wherewith this new community bore the worst consequences of its own sins, and, after a remarkably short time, learned to forsake the most serious of them. Early California history is not for babes, nor for sentimentalists; but its manly wickedness is full of the strength that, on occasion, freely converts itself into an admirable moral heroism."—*California: A Study of American Character.*—By JOSIAH ROYCE.

BOOK I

I

ON A morning in the latter part of January, 1848, James Marshall, who was superintending the construction of a sawmill for Captain Sutter in the wooded frontier of a remote country called California, walked half idly along the ditch of the tail-race. About a foot of water was running in the ditch. Something glittering on one of the spots laid bare by the crumbling of the bank attracted his eyes. He thought it was an opal, a stone of no particular value and quite common.

"Do you know," said Marshall a few days later, "I positively debated with myself two or three times whether I should take the trouble to bend my back to pick up one of the pieces, and had decided on not doing so, when farther on another glittering morsel caught my eye. I condescended to pick it up and, to my astonishment, found that it was a thin scale of what appeared to be pure gold."

Once detected, gold appeared to be anywhere, everywhere. The workmen, Mormons and Indians, in Sutter's employ who had previously noticed nothing, now began to pick gold up from under their feet, filling bottles and pouches, scraping dust and nuggets from crevices. A small boy washed out fourteen pounds of gold in two days.

"What surprizes me," said Captain Sutter, "is that this country should have been visited by so many scientific men, and that not one of them should ever have stumbled upon these treasures, that tribes of Indians have dwelt in it for centuries, and yet this gold should never have been discovered. I myself have passed the very spot above a hundred times during the last ten years, but was just as blind as the rest of them."

Not only had the keen-eyed trappers stumbled across it blindly, but gold hunters in search of gold had crossed and recrossed this wealth without seeing what they trod upon. Nearly every exploration party that entered the State passed over this ground.

"*Days of '49*," *copyright, 1925, by Gordon Young.*

An able Swedish mineralogist, in the employ of the Mexican government, was the guest of Captain Sutter and examined the gold fields himself without seeing the gold.

Something of this mysterious elusiveness persisted after gold seekers swarmed over the land, many of them expert miners and geologists from all parts of the world. The best of these miners and scientists accomplished less than the loutish and ignorant grubbers. Negroes, Dutchmen and drunken sailors were proverbially lucky; but at a time when new diggings were being found daily, and for ten years afterward, not so much as one rich discovery was made by a man of a high education as a miner or geologist.

James Marshall was the pathetic figure that Destiny most used and misused. An odd fate seemed to invest his careless words with charmed luck for gold hunters. When the first of the miners came rushing up, so eager to dig on the very spot where gold was discovered that they would have scraped the ground from under the sawmill itself, Marshall sent them haphazardly scurrying off, this way and that. As the original gold-finder, his directions were accepted oracularly. They followed his carelessly pointed finger and found gold.

Marshall himself not only discovered gold at Coloma, but at Placerville, one of the richest of all the diggings; and he was, or claimed to be, responsible for the discovery of gold in Australia. A man named Hargraves came to Marshall's sawmill one day for lumber, and being down on his luck, cursed California bitterly.

"See here, my friend," said Marshall, half amused, "if you don't like this country, why do you come here? Nobody invited you. Nobody will cry if you take yourself off. Go home and dig for gold. I warrant you I could find the stuff in Australia."

The miners were quite superstitious about Marshall's opinions. Hargraves in great earnestness asked—

"Do you really think so?"

"I am sure of it," said Marshall.

"If I thought so, I would go," said Hargraves, broodingly.

He went. He discovered gold. As a reward the British Government gave Hargraves 5,000 pounds and the Australian Government gave him 10,000 pounds.

Marshall was twice nearly lynched by miners who thought he knew where more gold could be found and would not tell them, for he pretended to knowledge he did not have. He found gold hard to get for himself and heavy to hold. He lived poorly and, forty years later, died in poverty alone in a cabin at Coloma; and he was buried there, within sight of the spot where he had casually picked from the gravel the tiny nugget that so permeated history with its influence as to change the course of empire, the destiny of nations.

SOMETIME, somehow, the gold would surely have been found, have filled the world with its fever; but a favoring destiny seems to have directed its discovery at a time most fortunate for the United States.

England, France, Russia and the United States knew that Mexico had only a very weak hold over the Spanish California; and all of them plotted to aquire the territory. If they had suspected gold, the furtive chess-like maneuvering of the diplomats would probably have become a game played with armed men.

The discovery of gold was made, almost to the day, a year after the decisive battle which, during the Mexican war, established the Americans in California. As it was, just seven days after the American flag was raised at Monterey, then the capital of California, a British man-of-war arrived to take possession of the country.

The real wealth of California was unsuspected; the United States made hardly more than a trivial show of force and won the territory. From one small part of this territory during the next fifteen years a billion dollars worth of gold was taken, and into it emigrants came by the thousands and hundreds of thousands.

At a time when the world's supply of gold was scarce, these emigrant miners, with pick, shovel, pan, rocker and sluices, each year turned approximately two hundred thousand pounds of actual gold, not money, but metal, into the United States. This gave those States an enormous commercial power among the nations.

Captain Sutter and Marshall had planned with their men to keep the discovery a secret.

Legend has it that a small boy gave a partly filled bottle of gold dust to one of Sutter's teamsters, who, at the first opportunity, undertook to see if this stuff supposed to be

gold was really worth anything by offering it to a storekeeper in exchange for brandy. The storekeeper was agitated. Word got about from mouth to ear. Trappers and traders in the neighborhood set off for Coloma.

Vague reports drifted through the wilderness and disturbed the lassitude of the Spanish village, San Francisco, a hundred and fifty miles away.

The thrilling news spread far and wide, world-wide. It came at a time when farm hands in the Eastern States thought themselves well paid with $12 a month for work from daylight to dark; when $1 a day was a good wage for a laborer; when $2,000 a year was a fine salary or business profit; when the man worth $10,000 was well off, the man with $30,000 rich. The news, confirmed by official reports and letters, told of a land, free to all comers, where any man, with only pick, shovel and pan, could gather gold, pure gold, by the handful.

The Military Governor of California, on August 17, 1848, reported to Washington:

"A small gutter, not more than a hundred yards long, and two or three deep, was pointed out to me as the one where two men had a short time before obtained $17,000 worth of gold. Hundreds of small ravines are to all appearances yet untouched. The most moderate estimate I could obtain from men acquainted with the subject was that upwards of 4,000 men were working in the gold district, of whom more than one-half were Indians, and that from $30,000 to $50,000 worth of gold, if not more, were daily obtained. No capital is required to obtain this gold, as the laboring man wants nothing but his pick and shovel and tin pan, with which to dig and wash the gravel, and many frequently pick gold out of the crevices of rocks with their knives, in pieces of from one to six ounces."

THESE reports were widely circulated, translated the world over, discussed and believed.

Sober-headed people got the idea that California was a place where gold could be picked up like fruit in an orchard, and from all parts of the world men broke into a stampede for the gold fields.

Steamship companies sold thousands of tickets when they had accommodation for hundreds only. Families by the thousands took to the covered wagons and streamed out across the plains. It is said that since the Crusades there has never been such a wide-flung pilgrimage toward one spot, and all who went hurried desperately. Footprints and bowsprits from every city and port in the world pointed toward California—a word of arbitrary coinage, taken from an ancient Spanish novel, in which it appears as the name of a fabulous island, rich in gold and precious stones; and in many parts of Europe the only maps that could be found did indeed show California as an island.

Every class and caste from every nationality, almost from every locality, was represented in the pell-mell rush that came trampling across the plains, and in the ships where people were jammed and crammed, often on short rations, usually sleeping on planks for berths, or the deck itself. For the most part they were a hardy assertive lot. The spirit of early California adventurers was so well known that many sea captains, accustomed to ruling their ships as they pleased, refused the command of ships carrying Argonauts.

"No, no," as one captain expressed it, "save me from a ship-load of Yankee passengers. You will find that just as soon as they recover from their first seasickness they will hold a mass meeting on the quarterdeck, without deigning to ask the captain's permission, and prescribe rules for the government of the ship; or perhaps they will dispose the captain altogether, and put in his place a popular sailor taken from before the mast, as their idea will be to run the vessel on democratic principles. So, excuse me from the command of a California passenger ship."

Men abandoned farms, stores, families, and started for the mines. Long emigrant trains, heading for Oregon where great tracts were offered to settlers, abruptly turned southward. The famed exodus of '49 almost depopulated many towns and counties from Missouri eastward. Indians, the desert, cholera, destroyed thousands of emigrants, but tens of thousands pressed on over a trail strewn with the abandoned household goods, wagons, bones of cattle.

Many who did not join in the first rush were later made feverish by the sight of prodigious nuggets brought from California and exhibited, their value being compounded by an admission fee. Crowds, mobs, gathered to gaze upon this gold, gold in

lumps bigger than a man's head. The French government purchased one such nugget, disposed of it by lottery and with the proceeds sent thousands of Frenchmen to the mines.

Almost anything that would float was fitted out on the Atlantic ports to carry gold seekers. Steam boats, paddle-wheelers, nearly flat-bottomed, were taken from lakes and rivers and sent around the Horn.

Seven hundred and sixty vessels, many of them rotten tubs, cleared from American ports in '49 and '50, loaded with gold hunters, and rounded the Horn. Most of these voyages were made in the Antarctic winter. Some ships lay for weeks, hove-to in storms on the roughest passage of the globe. All were over-crowded. Nearly all came into San Francisco with food exhausted and pumps working, but they came in. A strange benevolence attended the Argonauts of the Cape Horn route; not one of the seven hundred and sixty vessels that put out for California was lost.

It was popularly thought that the shortest and easiest way to California was to cross the Isthmus and take passage from Panama. Transportation companies encouraged this opinion, and directed the stampede across what was then perhaps as deadly a locality as any on earth.

The Isthmus was so fever-infested that a clause in each life insurance contract taken out by an emigrant stipulated that the policy was void if the insured spent the night at Chagres, the port of entry. All travellers and goods had to be transported part way up the Chagres river in small boats, then packed by mules into Panama. It seemed to be always raining. There were no hotels en route; there was little food, excepting such as emigrants carried with them. Men slept in wet blankets on the wet ground, and died like sick dogs. Those that lived did not always pause to bury the dead.

The emigrants piled up in a restless, gambling, quarreling mob at Panama, with every man eager for the steamers that came infrequently, and which when they did come could not begin to carry all the passengers that held tickets. Many, impatient to reach California before all the nuggets were picked over, put to sea in small boats. Others turned back, disgusted and homesick, toward the States. Great numbers, their money exhausted by the expenses and pleasures of Panama, were stranded and could neither go on nor turn back. Like flies in winter, men died; but from all over the world other men swarmed to the Isthmus.

SAN FRANCISCO was but little more than a Spanish village of adobe bricks, with a growth of ramshackle buildings at the edge of the bay where the few American traders, that dealt chiefly in hides and tallow, received and stored goods from ships that discharged cargoes at improvised wharfs and on the mud flats.

In the summer of '48, San Francisco had gone helter-skelter to the mines. The newspaper suspended. Editor and printer had gone for gold. Store keepers shut up shop, tacking on the door the scrawl, "Gone to the mines." The butchers, the bakers, the candlestick-makers all went. The city was empty, deserted. When the San Franciscans began to drift down from the hills again they found that their village had become the port of adventurers from every nation.

Ships without pilots rode over the bar of the Golden Gate, and some were run aground on the mud flats. Crews did not always stay to furl sails, but scrambled ashore and made off for the mines. Another crew could not be found, for no one wanted to leave the land of gold. At one time more than five hundred vessels that had been abandoned by their crews lay helplessly at anchor. Some ships were run aground and used for a time as store rooms or lodging houses. The shoveling down of the sand hills went on, and the hulk of more than one vessel that rounded the Horn now lies buried a mile from the waterfront.

Every class and condition of men and women came, and continued to come; all were eager, excited, restless, reckless; they had to be clothed, fed, housed, outfitted, entertained.

Speculators sent cargoes upon cargoes of merchandise. Goods were piled in the streets, and prices varied like the numbers of a lottery wheel and almost as rapidly. Flour was sometimes a dollar a pound, and at others times flour, 200 lb. sacks of it, were dumped into the mudholes to improve the street, along with kitchen stoves, and bails of tea, or whatever else happened to be heavy on the market. A sidewalk

was made from Montgomery street to the mail steamer office with boxes of first-class Virginia tobacco, containing 100 lbs. each, that was soon worth seventy-five cents a pound. Tobacco was at one time found to be the cheapest material for the foundation of small buildings.

Everything was a gamble. Prices and values whirled, soared, fell, rose again. In the autumn of '48 a citizen died, insolvent to the amount of $41,000; his administrators were delayed in settling his affairs, and real estate advanced so rapidly that less than a year later, when all his debts were paid, his heirs had a yearly income of $40,000.

The most conservative business was intensely speculative, for no one knew what ship with what cargo would come on the morrow; and when goods came there was no place to store them, so auctions were held on every hand, simultaneously, at times all day long, often at night amid the smoky flare of torches.

Tents and houses grew overnight like mushrooms. Lumber was at one time more than a dollar a foot. Houses were made of dry goods boxes, muslin and canvas. In hotels the partitions were of muslin. Rents were incredibly high. Any room twenty by sixty feet would rent for $1000 per month. Desk room at the end of a counter was a hundred dollars a month; big buildings brought a rental of $15,000 per month; bunks on an enclosed porch brought $21 a week, and in lodging houses space was chalked off on the floors for guests.

Life was intense and changing. No contracts were made for more than a month; buildings were rented and money loaned at ten per cent. by the month. Thirty days was a San Francisco year, and in that time its people lived a full round year. Property often changed hands twice a day, and in three years the city was burned five times.

Each time thousands of men were ruined, but the smoldering wreckage was trampled out by other men busily rebuilding their city, larger and more splendidly. The work of permanent construction went on through all the hurly-burly of boisterous recklessness and extravagance. Hills were tumbled into the bay; the pestilential marshes were filled; wharfs were built; iron buildings were put up, only to collapse more dangerously than wooden walls under the touch of fire. Bricks were brought around the Horn, and the cost of building with them was at first a dollar a brick. Stone was brought from China and Australia to make stores that would stand through a conflagration, but did not.

It was a helter-skelter city, bursting with crowds. The streets were littered with empty cans, bottles, old clothes. Few men owned baggage. When a new garment was bought the old one was thrown into the street. Laundry was $12 the dozen, big and little, at a time when a gutted market offered shirts at $10 the dozen. It was found cheaper and more convenient to send laundry to Honolulu, and even to China, crossing the Pacific Ocean twice to be cleaned.

The streets, saloons, gambling houses, were filled night and day with picturesque people. Strangers bumped against each other and became partners before they had told their names. On every side were bearded miners with the clay of the hills on them, wearing bright sashes and high-topped boots. Revolvers and bowie knives were as much a part of their dress as hats.

At a time when all men were armed and dangerous, a society of young hoodlums, mostly discharged soldiers, a bit fantastic of dress, calling themselves "Hounds," terrorized respectable citizens, levied contributions on shop-keepers and robbed foreigners; and often they paraded the streets, singing and shouting, with abandoned women on their arms. The citizens were so preoccupied with the whirlwind of speculation that for a time these same Hounds declared themselves to be the regulators of the city.

Gamblers, fastidious, in clean linen, dressed in black, without change of expression and never a gesture of haste, unless meaning to shoot or stab, sat behind heaps of gold, taking any bet from any man at any time. There was no limit, excepting the last flake of dust that the gambler had in his bank.

Spanish Californians mingled everywhere with the crowds; some of them poor, others richly clothed, with high-crowned glazed sombreros, short jackets of velvet overlaid with embroidery, wide sashes, *serapes*, rows of gold buttons down their slashed-bottom trousers—with drawers showing through the slash.

FRENCHMEN, Chinamen, Kanakas. Gaunt plainsmen, with eyes narrowed from much staring into the western sun which they had followed half way across the continent. Trappers in fur caps, with long rifles in their

hands. Indians, Germans, Englishmen, Jews. Every type and creed and race and caste and class: Lawyers, merchants, teamsters, soldiers, sailors, judges, men who had served in Congress, preachers—some of whom turned card gamblers and bartenders while others worked as laborers or preached like prophets in the very doorways of gambling houses.

There were men who knew their classics as a gambler knows his cards that shined the boots of other men. In this topsy-turvy land where each scrambled for what he could do, scholars turned laborers and ditch-diggers became capitalists. Count Raousset de Boulbon, of filibuster fame, who prided himself on royal blood, admitted that for a time he worked as a wharf laborer. There were Southern gentlemen, fire-eaters in black hats, with negro body servants; gamblers of the tin-horn stripe, harlots and a migratory flock of Sydney ducks.

An observant traveller has written that he was attracted by a large sign, "French Restaurant." He found the proprietor was a mulatto from Louisiana, who rented his building from a Jew, employed a Chinaman as cook, and a young Austrian as waiter. At the table an Irishman, a Scotchman and a Welshman were eating. Inquiry disclosed that the meat for the restaurant was furnished by a Dutch butcher, the vegetables by an Italian gardener, the milk by a Portuguese, and that a Mexican woman did the washing. Such was the cosmopolitan congestion of the city and mining camps.

Newcomers flocked in from the sea and miners swarmed down from the hills. Excitement and wealth gave impulse to every form of excess. There were generous virtues and generous follies. Gold poured upon the city and was passed from hand to hand, recklessly. Life was cheap and murders were unpunished; in the first four years there were twelve hundred murders and but one conviction. Quarrels and fights flared up through the crowds; men were killed nightly in the gambling houses, and the play about the table scarcely paused. At times men stood in the undried blood of those who had died and went on betting.

But mostly all men were in moods of rollicking good-nature. A lucky miner would shake the last dust from his pouch to hire a band to play while he called up a crowd around a barrel of whisky set out in the street for all comers to drink his health. All were strangers in a strange land. All were free of speech, free-handed and, with a kind of mirth, jeered at discomfort. Comic signs were stuck in the deepest mudholes:

This street is not passable. Not even jackassable

though during the winter rains, horses and even men drowned in these mudholes.

For months after the rush began there were few homes; merely shacks, tents, bunkhouses where men slept; barren lodging houses, a score of men to the room. Saloons and gambling houses were the city's rendezvous; and these, beginning in adobe buildings and tents, within a short time grew into great barn-like rooms or circus tents, their floors laid with rich carpets, their walls glittering with costly mirrors or oil paintings, mostly of nude women.

The city gathered every exotic ornament that a ship could bring from the Orient or Europe. Orchestras played night and day. "Home, Sweet Home" was a favorite melody. Comedians jigged and sang. Women danced to the thundering clap and stamp of women-hungry men. Coarse women from the foreign slums, dainty daughters of sin, dangerous leopard-like women, who had played with princes and ruined them; blood-sucking and passionately reckless women of all the races that have among them women of Rahab's calling came into the city; and also, quietly in the more secluded parts of the city, gathered the home-makers, wives who had crossed the plains, women who had brought their hearth stones around the Horn, mothers of the men who were to be the Sons of California. The women, beautiful and wanton, opened houses of carnival. Women, pretty as the proprietors could hire, whatever the wage, tended bar and lured men into the throbbing uncertainties of monte.

In a city where lonely men trampled one another's feet for standing room, a woman was a woman; and where few had virtue, none were condemned.

II

THE center of the Spanish town of Yerba Buena, changed but shortly before gold was discovered to San Francisco, was, as is usual in Spanish towns the world over, the Plaza, a vacant wind-swept sandy block

of ground, where *caballeros* left their horses and wagoners halted their creaking *carretas*, and on which stores fronted. The Plaza remained through the turbulence of San Francisco's growth and many disasters, and, under the name of Portsmouth Square, is still the Plaza.

Here in '49 mingled the miners and merchants. Horses, mules, oxen, wagons, heaps of goods, were crowded on the Plaza. Venders hawked their wares, candy, peanuts, medicine. Native Californians in bright trappings with little bells jingling, rode by. Richly dressed women, proud of themselves though all knew them for what they were, swept along among men who respectfully made way; and other women, of the same caste, in long skirts, or often in male attire, rode by furiously on spirited horses.

It was here, facing the Plaza, that Washington Hall, a famous, or infamous, house of shameless women looked brazenly at the Public Institute, a stone's throw away, where children gathered to school and on Sundays religious service was held; and, side by side, nearly encircling the Plaza the best known and largest gambling houses flourished.

One of the most luxurious of these gambling houses was the Magnolia.

ON A July noon a horseman, showing all the marks of a far traveler, rode slowly through the dusty streets and toward the Plaza.

The midsummer wind as usual whoofed through the streets, flinging sandy dust and straw fibers all about with gusty hands as if, too, taking part in the turbulent life of the city. Men bent their heads into it as they walked, turned their backs against it as they stood bartering together. Occasionally new-comers had their hats blown away and awkwardly gave chase.

The horseman had the complexion of a brown biscuit, and wore a heavy sombrero with leather thongs tied under his chin to hold the tent-like hat. The ends of a scarf bound around his head, Spanish fashion, whipped at the back of his neck. His jacket was of deerskin, embroidered with a bright design and intricately. His clothes were worn, dirty. A pearl-handled revolver in a greasy holster hung at his side, at his right side, which was not usual. A heavy short-handled whip dangled on his wrist, and he rode a California saddle, high of horn, deep of seat, with wide wooden stirrups. His eyes were narrowed as protection from the driving wind and sand, and one could not see their color. A rifle was in a scabbard under his knee, and a small roll of blankets was tied to the saddle, behind him. His name was Hales.

As he rode to the Plaza he looked about with calm interest. There were lines of men, standing in Indian file, reaching up the street for more than a block. For hours the men had been standing and moving step by step toward the post-office windows. Hales let his glance fall here and there, noticing the bustle, the queer mixture of men. It was all strange, but he seemed hardly curious.

A strolling vender of candy passed near. Hales leaned from the saddle.

"Do you know Hubert Lee?"

"He's out of town. Up to the mines."

The vender raised a bag of candy but Hales shook his head and rode on. He sat erect in the saddle, and picked his way with care, guiding his horse this way and that by a touch of the reins to avoid people on foot. There were many men on horseback coming and going through the streets; most of them rode recklessly. Hawkers cried their wares. Oxen bellowed. In the distance an auctioneer's gong was being beaten, calling the crowd to bargain and bid.

A storm of riders came round a corner, five or six young men, with a woman among them, and bore down the street. They wore sashes; some had colored ribbands faced on their coats. Their arms flopped and they bounced in their saddles as they rode. Some held to saddle horns. They rode without skill, but recklessly, and whooped—

"Out o' the way—we're Hounds! Hounds are coming!"

The woman rode easily at their head. She was not laughing, but sat with a kind of watchfulness. They lashed her horse from behind and lashed their own to keep up with her. She was a skilful rider. They were trying to see just how skilful.

Some of the people in the street, well out of the way, cheered her. They knew who she was. The city was accustomed to less harmful mischief from the Hounds. As

the escort of Dona Elvira they could have stormed through the Magnolia itself and been heartily cursed by only those whom they knocked over. She was the prettiest woman in the city; every one knew that, particularly Dona Elvira herself.

"Out o' the way, greaser!" a Hound yelled and deliberately guided his horse toward Hales.

Hales, moving at a walk, did not turn aside. It sounded and looked like a bad joke, and he was not in a mood for pleasantry.

Then Jerry Fletcher, a princely dandy among the Hounds, lifted his whip on the gallop and struck, crying as he passed: "I'll teach you respect for—"

The blow had fallen on the sombrero.

Hales, with jerk of rein, wheeled his horse and sank his spurs into the flank. The horse leaped with plunging bound on bound. Hales lurched forward in his saddle, seized Fletcher by the collar, reined up sharply and Fletcher's horse galloped from under him. The dandified Hound fell, sprawling backward into the dust.

"Down! Keep down there!" said Hales as his horse trampled restively near the frightened fellow who had started, with painfully jarred joints, to rise.

"You'll step on me! I thought you was a greaser!" Fletcher cried.

"And who are you," asked Hales with rising anger and deepening frown, "to raise a whip on a Spaniard!"

"I was just playin'. Having a little fun—honest, mister!"

"Fun, and strike a Spaniard with a whip?" asked Hales with a kind of puzzled wrath. He knew the Spanish Californians. "Down! Lie down there and keep down!"

Under the menace of Hales' whip Fletcher sank back into the dust and looked wildly about for his friends.

A crowd had rushed forward and gazed watchfully, most of the men well-pleased to see a Hound in the dust. They eyed Hales, wondering if he knew just what he was about in angering this bunch of dandified assassins.

Now he had turned his head and was looking toward the party of Hounds that, having with difficulty checked their horses, were coming back. But they did not ride at a gallop.

Elvira rode near, flanked with young dandies that swore valiantly, but made no bold movements. Hales sat with his hand on his hip, turned backward toward the handle of his revolver. His sombrero was pushed up. They could see his face, his eyes, the deliberate steadiness of his gaze. The Hounds were not distinguished for personal bravery. They hunted in packs. They had a pack now, but there was that in Hales' bearing which did not encourage quarrelsomeness.

"What do you mean, sir," cried Elvira wrathfully, her black eyes ablaze as she looked intently at him, "mistreating one of *my* friends! I won't have it!"

"Choose your friends with more care, then," said Hales. He neither touched his hat nor bowed.

"Jerry," she asked, "Jerry, are you hurt?"

"Yes—yes—oh I am hurt!" he whined.

"Get up. Don't lie there!"

"Down!" said Hales.

Jerry sank back and stared imploringly.

"What do you mean, sir!" Elvira demanded. "This is outrageous! Who are you?"

SHE was looking closely into Hales' face, brown, lean, covered with a stubbly beard. The bewildering Elvira was herself now a little bewildered.

In a city where men were humble to her slightest frown there was at least a new sensation for her in the cool poise, that was like mystery, of this man. It gave her pleasure to torment men. She was spoiled, insatiable, restless, with nerves in her lithe body always crying for excitement—an intriguing, greedy woman, warm, soft, treacherous.

"Why, sir," she asked, altering her tone a little, "do you insult me?"

Hales looked at her as if the question was hardly worth an answer. He had a way of looking steadily at a person before speaking.

"You are mistaken. If the object on the ground is dear to you, my compliments, madam! Take it off with you!"

Snickers and a few guffaws broke out from those that stood near. She glanced disdainfully about. To her the Hounds were hardly more than grooms; they might be more familiar than grooms, and were at times companions of a sort, but socially

her friends were such men as Col. Nevinson, and Monsieur Max of the Magnolia.

"Sir, you are insolent!"

"Madam, in all courtesy, I offer you back your—hound. You see, he minds well."

An intermingling of impulses stirred her. She dreaded the edge of his tongue, and this angered her. But his nearly insolent composure and purely insolent boldness fascinated her. Besides she half liked the steadiness in his eyes, that had in it not challenge, but dominance.

"Why," she asked with sudden softening of tone and manner, "are you rude to me?"

She was as supple in her art as a serpent with its body. He looked at her with a peculiar scrutiny. If he knew anything of race, she was Spanish, or partly so.

Jerry Fletcher, like a furtive cripple, was trying to steal off. Some one in the crowd shouted, "He's gittin' away, mister!" Hales reined back, glanced down, raised his whip. With a quick lunge he leaned far from the saddle, and as the lash fell on Fletcher's head a bullet passed over the saddle.

One of the Hounds, on horseback, summoning what boldness he could, had put his hand into his pocket and, waiting until Hales' head was turned, fired with a derringer. The bullet struck an on-looker. The crowd, as if the report was an explosion that sent them tottering backward, gave way, turning and stumbling to be clear of bullets.

Hales, with blow of spurs and jerk of reins, wheeled his horse and straightened up, gun in hand. A hubbub of panicky cries broke out from those who thought themselves in line of fire; but he did not shoot.

Elvira herself had struck down the derringer with one blow, and with the second lashed her riding whip full into the face of the Hound, who cried out in pain, covered his face with an arm, kicked frantically at his horse, and rode off as fast as he could go. The other Hounds followed him.

"Madam," said Hales, loosening the thongs under his chin and lifting his sombrero, "I thank you."

She answered with flippant coolness—

"He is such a poor marksman I knew that he would hit some one else."

"Then you should have been more careful, madam, for I see they are helping some poor —— off."

Elvira laughed softly with head high. This man interested her; she was not quite sure that he pleased her, but he was interesting in a way.

"I would like to know your name," she said.

Again the steady look before he spoke, a moment's questioning stare; then—

"Do you know Hubert Lee?"

"Hubert Lee? Why, yes," she said a little doubtfully.

Hubert Lee was well known, though she did not know him. She knew of him. Her very good friend, Col. Nevinson, and Hubert Lee were not friends.

"Where can I find out about him? I am looking for him."

"Oh?" She wondered if his interest in Lee was friendly. "I don't think he is here, now. He is your friend?" She was insatiably curious, and incurably meddlesome, cunning, a schemer of purposeless little tangles. Anything for a moment's excitement; and she enjoyed the sensation of being clever. "You are looking for Mr. Lee?"

He nodded.

"And your name?" she asked amiably.

"Dick Hales."

"Oh! Hales? Dick Hales—*Hales?*" she repeatedly slowly, lowering her lashes, but keeping her eyes on him. "I believe I know that name?"

On the instant Hales pressed his horse almost to her side. His look was intense. He demanded in a low voice—

"If you do, madam, tell me! Where have you heard it? I will pay—"

She was faintly startled. There was a quiet angered intensity in his manner. His gaze was searching.

"There was a Hales," she began doubtfully, like one who makes a timid step where there may be danger, "that made a famous name for himself during the Mexican War—why I heard of him even in Cuba! He—"

Hales lifted his hand in a gesture of interruption, and said sharply—

"That is not it. You have known of no one else? Never heard the name here—here in San Francisco?"

"I think I have," she said, lying readily. "Yes—" she watched carefully as she spoke, searching his features for something to guide her— "I know I have. There was a

man"—she paused—"a man who *called* himself Hales, Dick Hales. Claimed to be the officer who—"

Her cleverness missed the mark. Interest in what she was saying went out of his face.

"Any man that wants it is welcome to the name," he said indifferently.

She could tell that his thoughts were far off, not on her, not on what he was saying.

He touched his sombrero with a careless half-military salute, reined his horse about and rode on to the Plaza.

"Hmm-*hmm!*" said Dona Elvira, gazing after him with widened eyes. "It isn't a *man* he's looking for! Hales? Dick Hales—ah—"

She made a sharp sibilant sucking sound between her teeth as she smiled. Then, resentfully, she recalled that he had not appeared to notice that she was beautiful.

IN THE center of the Plaza was a flagpole where Captain Montgomery had raised the American flag three years before and given to the Plaza the name of his ship, *Portsmouth;* encircling this pole was a rough corral; within the corral were the horses and oxen of traders.

Men gathered about and bought and sold stock. They lounged against wagons, or the fence, eying cattle. They chewed tobacco, whittled, bargained shrewdly in tones of drawling disinterest.

Hales rode near the corral, reined up, looked slowly about. He said to an idling miner—

"Who's buying?"

The miner rubbed the back of his hand back and forth across his bearded mouth, eying Hales, then slowly turning toward a group of men, shouted—

"Hey, ye danged swindlin' Yankee hoss thieves! Here's a man with a hoss to sell. Gather up an' lie to him!"

Men from many sides looked up, and moving slowly, with an air of boredom, came toward Hales, examining him first, then the horse. Some, on second glance, were a little surprized that he was not a Spaniard.

There was a Spanish brand on the horse, but not one American in two hundred knew anything of brands, excepting vaguely that Spaniards put them on horses. Americans were contemptuously indifferent to Greasers and their customs.

A slope-shouldered, coatless fellow, with new broad suspenders that held his homespun trousers well against his ribs, studied the horse for a moment, then looked away, took out his pocket-knife, picked up a bit of wood, began whittling and said disconsolately:

"Ye *might* call that a hoss I reckon." Then, with head cocked to one side as he eyed the horse from fetlocks to ears. "Fifty dollars. Coin."

Coin was at a premium. Banks made good money exchanging gold pieces for gold dust.

"Everything as it stands," said Hales. "Saddle, rifle, bridle, blankets."

"An' hoss?" inquired the miner, absently eying the rifle.

"Horse too."

"Hundred dollars. Dust," said a voice.

"What kind o' rifle?" inquired the miner, holding a piece of tobacco before his mouth, as if whether or not he bit into it depended on the answer.

"St. Louis."

"Then it's a danged good one I bet. Ever kill a bear with it?"

"No."

"Would I reckon, heh?"

The lean coatless man who was known as Hank said wearily—

"We're buyin' a hoss—not a rifle."

"Don't be too sure," said the miner.

"Hundred. Coin," said Hank.

Voices began rapidly: "One-twenty"—"Forty"—"fifty."

"One-sixty," said Hank, and went on whittling.

"One-eighty!"

"That hoss," said Hank, whittling slowly, and pausing between words to see how thin a shaving he could peel, "is nigh lame in the left fore foot. He's nigh wind broke, I bet a pretty. He's got saddle sore from the way he twitches. He's no good as a hoss till he's fed three months, and feed it is high. But I'll give two hundred, an' not a blamed cent more."

Silence followed. Then the bearded miner stooped, searched about for a clean straw, examined it studiously, stuck it into his mouth and said with unconcern—

"Two-fifty, pard."

"You've bought a hoss, a worthless hoss, I reckon," Hank answered in disgust, throwing aside his stick and returning the knife to his pocket.

"It's all yourn," said some one.

"Two-fifty?" asked the miner, staring at Hales. "Dust?"

"Yes."

The miner drew a heavy buckskin pouch from his pocket and went to a wide board on two barrels, where there was gold scales. He adjusted the scales.

"Here, some o' you fellers, hold your hats against this danged wind."

Men sheltered the scales against the thievish gusts of wind and the miner poured in dust.

"Where's your bag?" he asked, looking up at Hales, who remained in the saddle.

Hales drew an empty buckskin pouch from his pocket and tossed it to the miner. It was a pouch Hales had made. It had never been touched with dust.

"Kinda lean an' underfed, this here sack. All skin, like one o' Hank's hosses."

The miner poured the dust into it, drew the strings, and handed it up to Hales, who threw aside the reins as he dismounted.

He stood for a moment staring at the row of gambling houses, then without a word, with spurs clattering, strode directly toward the Magnolia.

Behind him the miner was saying, as he removed the rifle and looked at it with satisfaction—

"Now, fellers, gather up, gather up. All I bought was a rifle. Here's a hoss for sale. Saddle, bridle, blankets. You know any hoss Hank offers two hundred for is worth five. That's why I bid 'bove him. An' this here, gentlemen, is one of the best hosses in Californy.

"I happen as how to know, gentlemen, somethin' about this hoss. See that there brand. To you fellers it may look like a picture of the —— with the cramps, like a feller up to Sacramento said. That there is the de Soler brand—somethin' *they* call a cross in a circle. They was a string of de Soler hosses up to Sacramento just before I come down. They fetched three-fifty to four hundred. Now just look at this here hoss. What am I bid? Hank he just said two hundred, so we'll start off with that. He don't care nothin' about this rifle. He 's buying a hoss. Two hundred an' what?"

Hank stooped for his piece of wood and reached for his knife, cocked his head, and walked half way around the horse as though he had never seen it before; then:

"Fifty. Coin."

Other voices ran up the figures, and the miner urged them on, up and up.

THE Magnolia was a wide and very long room, rather low of ceiling, partly of adobe walls, partly of rough lumber. A long marble-topped bar ran across one end. Near an end of the bar was a low platform that belonged to the negro orchestra. At the rear of the room was a glassed-in balcony. The floor of the balcony was scarcely higher than a rather short man's head; and if a tall man entered the balcony apartment, or "office," as it was called, his head would strike the ceiling. Monsieur Max, who owned the gambling hall, did not care. He was a short man.

The Magnolia, and other gambling houses too, looked very much like the halls of warlike barbarians who had plundered a luxurious people, filling their rude shelter with treasures. Some of the tables used for gambling were of carved teak; others of rough lumber, covered with blankets, velvet or baize. Before the tables were rough benches; above some of them were glass candelabra, above others, lanterns.

The noon hour was the dullest hour in San Francisco life; this being the low ebb of revelry which lasted through the night and reawakened in the afternoon.

When Hales entered there were only two or three gamblers sitting at their tables, and about these but a few men dabbled with small sums.

He glanced about, hardly pausing, and went directly to a table where a tall, pale man, with a slight tread of a scar on his temple, sat alone, idly shuffling his cards. It was said that Stewart Dawes never slept.

"Is your game open?" asked Hales.

Dawes gave him a steady searching look, answering quietly—

"Certainly, sir. Be seated."

"Deal," said Hales, and remained standing.

The gambler moved his chair an inch or two, opened the drawer of his table and brought out several stacks of gold coin which he arranged methodically in the center of the table. With unhurried movement he drew a derringer and placed it on the table at his elbow, then shuffled the thin Spanish cards dexterously. He noticed

particularly that Hales kept his eyes fastened on the cards.

"This man is a gambler," said Dawes to himself, presenting the cards to be cut.

Hales cut them and squeezed the two parts of the deck into alignment. Then his hand, as if absently, touched his revolver and came to rest on his hip, palm turned backward. Dawes touched his derringer, moving it half an inch.

Their eyes met for a moment. Neither spoke. Dawes understood that at the first false move he would be shot, without warning. The gambler's fingers, with no more tremor than a lifeless hand would have shown, drew off the monte layout.

Hales, saying "All of it," dropped his pouch on the bottom layout, playing an ace, watching the deal with frank and menacing suspicion.

He won.

He bet everything and a few seconds later won again.

"Ah, you are in luck," said Dawes pleasantly. "My congratulations."

"Deal," said Hales.

Dawes was a clever gambler, but a thorough gambler rather than a courageous man, and knew when it was wise to take a loss and to deal fairly.

Without a word, and with an air of calmness, imperturbably, Dawes again opened his drawer and drew out two large bags of gold dust.

"Once more," said Hales.

He won.

"How about trying just once more?" Dawes asked, temptingly opening his drawer.

"No. But I'll be back. You happen to know if Hubert Lee is in town?"

"He is not. Unless he came today."

Hales gathered up his gold, sticking the coins into the pouch pockets of his wide belt, and squeezing the bags of gold dust into his jacket. Then he turned and went from the Magnolia, walking with rattle and clatter of spur rowels.

Not a shade of expression crossed Dawes' cool white face. He quietly opened his drawer, estimated his loss, returned the derringer to his pocket, touched the hilt of the bowie knife in a sheath under his coat, then began shuffling his cards, waiting imperturbably for the next who would come to try what fortune offered.

III

ABOUT the same hour that Hales had reached the city, the *Martin O'Day*, out of New York, came in. Packed somehow between decks, there came also five hundred and twenty-three passengers; among them were three women, two of whom were young and beautiful. The women had vanished quickly from view.

The passengers, in a sort of bewildered flurry, were brought to a rickety landing by boatmen who charged $2 per head. They were greeted by a loud-mouthed urging from hawkers and barkers, showers of business cards fell about them; and here and there was lifted the enticing cry: "Gold! Gold! Gold! Here's where you get your gold! A hundred dollars if you guess the ace!" Sharpers fiddled with studied clumsiness at cards spread on barrel heads.

Of more interest than passengers to the city was the fact that the *Martin O'Day* brought a huge mirror for the Magnolia.

During the afternoon this was lowered in a web of ropes from the ship to a lighter on which Monsieur Max fretted in proprietory excitement. A crowd, there were always crowds, gathered to watch the crated mirror brought ashore.

Hales, passing that way, paused, rolled a cornhusk cigaret, and looked on without interest.

A small fellow of sparrow-like alertness and impudent cockney cast of face jostled Hales as he rushed by to slap the back of a man standing near.

The cockney wore a cap that settled about his ears, with visor turned up like a shabby coronet. His coat was much too large and the sleeves were rolled back over his wrists.

As he slapped the tall young man he cried—

"I-Oh, Johnny Tyler! We're 'ere at larst, eh matey-O? The *Marty Ho'Day's* bloomin' 'ooker, even if she was nymed arfter me. An' shipmyte. I'll give it to yer stryght—Miss Tesler likes yer, Johnny. If yer wasn't the right sort of bloke, I'd see yer in ——, I would, wivout tellin' of yer that she likes yer, Johnny. Stryght!"

John Taylor regarded the cockney with startled embarrassment and disapproval. He was tall, very erect, young and self-consciously reserved of bearing. At the first glance of his face as he turned, Hales

felt that he recognized the boy as some one that he knew. But whatever it was that had suggested a remembrance slipped away elusively, as a vague wisp of dream-thought does when one gropes to drag it into view.

"There is no need, sir," said Taylor, firmly, "for you to address me in that manner. Or at all, sir!"

The little cockney grinned with unruffled friendliness.

"Blimeme, Johnny, yer a lucky bloke! Ow, now wot the ——!"

The cockney dashed off to where the stevedores were lifting the mirror and wading about in the shallow water and mud.

Young Taylor had not been in the city three hours, and was increasingly bewildered. The city was not as he had expected. He was from Boston. This was like the riotous camping place of nomadic barbarians.

The four months on shipboard had been difficult enough, but he had managed to keep pretty much to himself among the crowd of passengers that pressed his elbows and tramped about the deck. That strange foreign gentleman, Mr. Tesla, and his daughter, had been almost the only acquaintances that Taylor had made. Mr. Tesla was the most important passenger. He, of all on board, had a stateroom to himself, as well as another for his daughter and her attendant.

This cockney had been discovered as a stowaway. The mate bringing him to the captain, had dragged him aft and thrown him down the stairs, so that he fell right at the feet of Mr. Tesla and his daughter, who were just coming on deck. She had been very angry at the mate, and insisted upon taking the matter up with the captain. Mr. Tesla, a little bored, had offered to pay the stowaway's passage, and privately did, though Miss Tesla demanded that the stowaway be given passage to compensate for such mistreatment.

"What's your name?" the captain had asked.

"Martin Ho'Day," said the cockney, instantly. "I thought as 'ow I 'ad the right on a —— 'ooker as is nymed arfter me!"

Miss Tesla was already bored by the tedium of ship life. Besides her maid, a tall, wellfavored, but ominous looking Spanish type of woman, there was only one other woman on board; and though this was a very agreeable and pretty young woman, with the smallest of rosebud mouths, she travelled alone and permitted men to be attentive to her. There was no doubt as to Madame Renault's caste.

Miss Tesla would not so much as look, even disdainfully, at the sinful little French woman, nor at the men who did look at her; which was why she had shown favor to young John Taylor.

In the naïve impudence of the small cockney, Miss Tesla had found much amusement. His comments delighted her. He was as full of meddlesome tricks and self-assurance as a monkey.

One day in perverse curiosity she asked—

"Don't you think the French woman is pretty, Martin?"

"'Er? Not by 'arf!" he answered rapidly out of his street-bred wisdom. "See 'er mouf? No bigger'n a mouse 'ole, it 'ain't. Look out for them as 'as a little mouf. Them as 'as little mouves is stingy as ——!"

John Taylor had grown very much attached to Miss Tesla, but he had been appallingly shocked to discover that Mr. Tesla was the representative of a French syndicate that owned an interest in many gambling houses in San Francisco. Taylor had thought him a gentleman, a refined, quiet, intelligent gentleman—and he was a "gambler."

Young Taylor came from a rather proud Boston family, a Puritan family in which there had appeared a most distressing strain of wayward blood. His own sister, who had married a young officer, the son of a wealthy family, had become a notorious woman; and, until she disappeared, had seemed actually to delight in creating scandal. It had all developed, presumably, through a weakness for drink.

"My brother, who some years ago went West and took up a farm," said John Taylor one day to Mr. Tesla, "wrote that he was going overland to California. I was ready to take my bar examination, but his letter gave me the gold fever. I don't know a person there, but I have a letter to Mr. Hubert Lee, who, I understand, is prominent in the country. He has lived there for many years. Was a trader and hide-buyer until he made a fortune in the gold fields."

"So?" said Mr. Tesla with quiet interest. "Hubert Lee? It must be the same

gentleman. He owns an interest in the syndicate—"

So it was that John Taylor, who had very strict ideas, learned that Mr. Tesla was the manager of a big gambling syndicate.

YOUNG Taylor had promised his parents that he would avoid evil companions; that had been difficult enough on shipboard, but San Francisco appeared to be a congested city of mad ruffians, outlandishly unkempt. It was impossible to avoid them. On the street, villainous looking strangers, all armed, stopped him abruptly and, knowing that he was just off a ship, demanded the news from "home."

One boisterous fellow, half drunk, had pressed him against a wall, saying—

"Just in, hey? After gold, hey? I'll show you, young feller! Look here. Hold your hand."

The man drew a buckskin pouch, opened it, and grabbing Taylor's hand shook out at least a tablespoonful of golden dust.

"There you are! Salt that in a letter to your ma! Californy gold! Plenty more where this come from. Mountains of it! I just wanted to show you!"

The man laughed recklessly, crammed the pouch into his pocket and stumbled off.

Taylor as yet had not taken lodgings. He had looked about, but the best he could find was a canvas bunk in a second story room, utterly bare except for tiers of such bunks, for which the proprietor bruskly demanded eight dollars per night.

He had decided that he would have to take such a bunk, and had returned for his baggage, which he had left in a store near the waterfront.

The mirror was being escorted up the street by a swarm of men. The little cockney ran among them, busily, as if helping to superintend.

As Taylor went off, Hales looked after him, thinking:

"—something about that boy. Fine, clean fellow—looks out of place in this city. Since Hubert Lee isn't in town I suppose I'll have to look for that poor woman wherever I can. I don't think much of Lee for not taking her—not taking care of her, since he knew who she was. I shall tell him so. He could have done that as well as write me. My ——, I almost hope that I don't find her!"

IV

JOHN TAYLOR picked up his two heavy bags and struggled back toward the Plaza. They were leaden with the weight of books. As long as he had good books he would not be lonely anywhere.

He stopped to rest his arms.

Near-by two men were talking. One was sharply featured, with a sort of nervous good-nature and the look of a man shrewd at business. The other was a large man, tall, rotund of body, massive, full and round of face. His voice was deep, deliberate, sonorous. He carried a heavy cane with gold knob, wore a black frock coat, and when he removed his wide-brimmed soft black hat to wipe his forehead it was disclosed that he was as bald as a friar, with a fringe of gray reaching from ear to ear.

He was addressed repeatedly as "Judge," and except for the genial repose of his countenance, a tolerant kindliness in his bearing, he might have been taken for one who was a bit pompous, particularly as he used flowing sentences and had a rather formal manner of address.

"I can't lose, Judge. My rents are going up. Land is doubling every three months. As I explained to you, yesterday, I can't lose!"

"Sir, the affairs of mortals are too uncertain for a judicial use of the words, 'I can't lose!' "

"Nothing risked, nothing gained, Judge."

"Sir, we do not win Heaven by shaking dice with the devil!"

Said the shrewd man of business in rather petulant raillery:

"When I get my hands full of earthly goods, I'll look out for heaven. I am not a thief. I have merely used the opportunity that fell into my hands. I haven't hid from anybody what I have done and am doing. I would have been a fool not to use other people's money when I got the chance. Now honestly, don't you think it worth the risk?"

" 'Worth,' sir, is a term of vague import. The things that are worth while to me, sir, are sound sleep, a clear head, ripe digestion. I would not undergo your anxieties for ten times the gain that you anticipate."

"But, Judge, as a lover of poetry, you know that there is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune."

"Ah," said the Judge, with freshened interest, tapping the ground with his cane, "a money-changer with the words of a poet on his lips is alarmingly suggestive of the devil quoting Scripture. Return to that same poet and learn that he has most fittingly called this Fortune a blind goddess careening over the world on a rolling stone. Sir, my fortune is of such modest proportions that—

"I fear not loss, I hope not gain,
I envy none, I none disdain."

"No Yankee wrote that!" cried the man of business with satisfaction. "You get that poetry nonsense out of your head."

"Poetry, sir," said the Judge with amiable composure, "is to the soul as wine to the flesh. It warms and enlivens and sets aglow—"

But the man of business waved his hand in pretended disgust, in which there was no doubt true feeling, and went away, hurrying.

The Judge stood for a moment in broad good-nature, watching his friend rush off among men who also rushed. Then he turned massively and noticed Taylor, looked at his bags on the ground, at his clothes, looked carefully at his face.

"Ah, young man, you have not been long in our fair city. You too, I take it, come with the hope that yours will be the touch of Midas, turning mud and sand into gold. What do you think of our city?"

"It seems a Babel, or," Taylor added, hardly conscious of humor, "a shabby Babylon."

"Excellent!" said the Judge, looking more closely at him. "Will you, sir, join me in a drink?"

"I do not drink."

The Judge regarded him with mild surprize—

"You do not drink? Why not?"

"I think I am better off without liquor."

"You have studied for the—ah—ministry?" said the Judge, slowly, kindly.

"No. I was reading for the bar."

"A lawyer, ah!" The Judge thoughtfully looked at Taylor, noting him in every detail, measuring him with the penetration of one who for thirty years has heard the searching confession of clients, studied jurors, examined witnesses. "You have friends accompanying you!"

"I came today, alone. I wouldn't have come at all, but my brother is coming, overland."

"And you have been studying for the bar? This is fortunate. There is in fact a professional matter upon which I would value the opinion of a younger man than myself. Will you accompany me, sir? Come with me, right with me!"

The Judge spoke with cordial insistence, and bending with some slight effort and a mild grunt, he took up one of Taylor's bags and started on his way.

They went about a block from the Plaza and came to stairway that led up the side of a hardware store in a frame building. It was a rickety stairs and trembled under the massive figure of the Judge.

He led the way into a room that seemed almost bare. The floor was bare. There were two plain kitchen chairs. A rough table was the desk. Shelves were made of boxes, and on these shelves were many books, most of them bound in heavy ochre-colored sheep's skin. They looked like law books, but they were not. On one wall was a large engraved portrait of Daniel Webster, his frog-like jaws set in an expression of stern truculence. On another wall was a portrait of Chief Justice Marshall, sternly ascetic and intellectually aloof. The Judge, whose judgement of men was excellent, thought these two of the greatest men that had ever been born in America.

There was a lamp with a badly smoked chimney on the table, and a muslin curtain on a wire was drawn across the room for a partition, behind which were the sleeping quarters for the Judge and a small Spanish boy.

This boy, Mateo, was about fifteen or sixteen, with a shy girlish smile, who had lived in the city all his life, knew all the history and gossip of Spanish families in the vicinity and ran errands for the Judge.

"Sit down, sir," said the Judge, and added a few lines of poetry to the invitation. He weaved poetry through his conversation as readily as some men interlaced their speech with profanity.

Taylor lingered a moment, running his eyes over the backs of the books, for a book lover is as bad as a drunkard, and at the sight of what charms him, goes to it hungrily. Here were names which Taylor, though he thought himself pretty well educated, knew only by the dimmest report: Rabelais, Hudibras, A North's Plutarch,

Old English Plays, a ponderous and well-worn Bible, Shakespeare and a very familiar name, "Paradise Lost."

"The advisors of my youth, the companions of my maturity," said the Judge, with a gesture as if really introducing the young man to the volumes. "But sit down, sir."

Taylor sat down, wonderingly. The Judge put aside his gold-headed cane and, standing with hands under his coat tails, balanced himself now on his heels, now on his toes, and looked at the young man carefully.

"SIR," he began with sonorous modulation," "you are newly equipped for the bar, and your brain still gleams with the whetting of text books. I am an old and rusty lawyer, but not too old sir, not too proud of my gray hairs, to put my ears to the lips of a younger man. And sir, as one counselor to another, I seek a little assistance, for which, sir—" he drew a heavy leather wallet from under his coat tail and clinked it on the palm of his hand—"I shall readily bestow fitting remuneration."

Taylor felt confused and doubtful. He liked this strange massive gentlemen, who had an old-fashioned manner of speech and bearing; but Taylor, for all the quite good opinion of himself that college and family tradition had confirmed, could hardly see why a person of age and evident experience would care for any legal assistance from a young man not yet admitted to the bar. But the Judge was convincing. Taylor listened absorbedly and forgot his doubts.

"Sir, the gentleman with whom you saw me conversing on the Plaza is a merchandise broker. Instead of refunding to certain English merchants the money collected for their goods, which he disposed of profitably, he has invested it in city property. His wealth grows apace.

"He makes no secret of this speculation. He points out that he has merely taken advantage of an opportunity. He acknowledges his debt, but he is so heavily involved that to gather in the necessary cash for a settlement would greatly injure, if not ruin his investments. The English merchants are taking what feeble means they can, being so remote from this unsettled community, to recover their property. He has asked me to assume charge of his difficulty and relieve him of the pressure that is being brought to bear to compel a settlement. Now, sir, what procedure do *you* suggest?"

"That he pay what he owes," said Taylor, whose ideas of honesty were simple and rigid.

"I see. I see. Um-hmm. There is much money involved. Our fees would be quite munificent."

"No. He is a thief, however successful. I would advise him, but not defend his theft!"

The Judge nodded gravely:

"Ah I see. I see. And I am reassured. I felt that perhaps I had remained too old-fashioned and was not up to the wrinkles and quiddities of the day. But the principals of equity and honesty are eternal. I advised him, sir, that his defense should begin after his restitution. I am delighted that a young attorney should confirm my elderly judgment. Further more, sir, in this shabby Babylon—a most excellent phrase, that!—there is more drawing of deeds, devises, conveyances, contracts, more work suitable to a clerk, than a man of my years can take pleasure in. I am wearied every day by that sort of work. And there are so many cases of doubtful merit offered for my consideration that I would value, value, sir! the advice and association of a young man for whose judgment I have the greatest respect. Sir, I invite you to enter into a partnership with myself."

Taylor flushed with excitement and stammered—

"But I am not a lawyer—yet!"

"Sir, it is of course necessary at times to know something of law in order to be a lawyer. Any numbskull, sir, can butt his head against Blackstone a sufficient number of times to pass a bar examination. But the great essentials of a good lawyer, sir, are honesty of judgment and love of justice, to which should be added a profound reverence for the poets. For mark you, sir, in thirty years at Bar and Bench, I have never known an evil man, or an unwise man, to venerate the poets; who, sir, are men of God as surely as were the prophets of Judea. Sir, your hand. We now enter into partnership as the legal firm of Deering and—by the way, sir, what *is* your name?"

V

THAT evening there was much excitement in the Magnolia. The largest mirror in California, it remained the largest for many months, too, was set into the wall behind the bar.

The proprietor of the Magnolia, Monsieur Max, no one knew that he had more of a name than that, was a short tubby fellow, with a heavy black mustache, tightly crinkled at the ends. He always wore a wide red sash; diamonds glittered on his shirt front, flashed from his fingers.

The negroes on their platform blared and tooted. The crowd gaped and craned across the bar; miners stared fascinated at unfamiliar bearded faces they knew for their own.

Some said this mirror had cost $5000. Others scoffed. "A lookin' glass like that, $5000! Be reasonable, sir. Say $20,000." Californians' figures were then as now large.

It was as if the toilers of Babel had gathered there. The great room was packed with people, moving restlessly. A film of tobacco smoke hung over their heads. Nearly all voices were low-pitched, mumbling, buzzing. About the gambling tables the crowd was silent except for an occasional low exclamation from those that lost or won. The faint metallic staccato of soft clinking was heard through the hum and drone of voices, for hundreds of men shuffled and toyed with gold and silver coins in their hands.

The streets, without sidewalks and unlighted, were nearly deserted. Excepting saloons and gambling houses there were no other places of amusement, unless one went among the Chilean encampment where the lowest of women, owned by men lower than themselves, aided in the robbery, often the murder of those who came to them; or among the cribs and taverns of the waterfront. Lonely men that did not drink and would not gamble entered such gambling halls as the Magnolia, the Bella Union, the El Dorado, the Verandah, and a dozen other houses, where there were bright furnishings, a blaze of lights, carpets, music, people.

Ragged miners and Southern gentlemen, dignified Mexicans and tipsy sailors, sat together on the same bench at monte tables. Other men, of all classes, stood three and four deep, reaching across to lay their bets. A curious invisibility seemed to hide the clothes a man wore, and beards concealed many of the faces. Where all men were strangers names were unimportant.

Gamblers and lookouts were at all the tables. Lookouts were needed when the play was made by so many people.

An odd thing of the '49-50's was that these professional gamblers of the higher caste were, in manner and in dress, as much alike as if they were a trained and costumed brotherhood. Their hands were white, supple, slim. They were unemotional, aloof, quiet of speech at all times, drank, if at all, sparingly. They dealt faro and monte under the watchful eyes of dangerous, suspicious men. They dealt with studied slowness and with studied unconcern watched the cards fall. There was seldom the flicker of an eyelash, whatever the gold won or lost. With sinister indifference they seemed never to notice who was playing against them, or for how much, but they dealt with a revolver, and often a bowie knife too, on the table at their elbows.

A FLARE of voices rose, sharp with anger. The next instant a shot was fired. Frightened voices broke out, then there was a moment's hush and pause all through the room; and, as no more shots followed, some men surged toward the scene; others, merely glancing that way, went on with their conversation. Some players at distant tables did not turn their heads. The orchestra, with only a discordant note or two, went on with "Turkey in the Straw."

Martin O'Day, by headlong squirming, pressed through the crowd and emerged before a monte table where a tall gambler, pale, expressionless except for a gleam of eye and thinner line at his thin mouth, stood with hand to derringer on the table before him and watched a drunken miner, with a hole in his breast, being helped off.

The little cockney demanded rapidly of the men about him, turning from one to another:

"Wot's the muss? I sy, wot's the row!"

The gambler, attracted by the shrill insistence of the cockney voice, glanced toward him; the gaze lingered with penetrative searching for a moment, but the gambler disdained to speak; then, casually

brushing at a glint of gold dust on his dark sleeve, reseated himself, and without a glance toward any one began shuffling the thin Spanish cards.

"Make your bets, gentlemen! Make your bets," droned his companion, the lookout, indifferently.

"I sy," Martin demanded, a little subdued by the gambler's eyes, but insistent on knowing what it was all about, and grasping at the arm of a man near him, "I sy, wot's the row?"

This man was Hubert Lee, tall, browned, clean shaven. He wore a new broadcloth suit, freshly polished boots, and a sombrero. He had been in California for years as the agent, trader, hide-buyer, for a firm of big leather merchants in the State.

At the first news of gold, he, being used to the country and to trading with Indians, had employed a large number of them, profitably until rum sellers crowded too close to the diggings. But he had made a fortune and invested heavily in San Francisco property. He was one of the important men of the city, with many enemies.

After looking the cockney up and down with a half-suspicious scrutiny, Lee grinned broadly, amused.

"Just in, eh? Well, youngster, the gentelman that is being escorted off with a hole near his heart lost two huhdred ounces of gold in about an hour, then had the bad judgment to argue with Stewart Dawes, the same being the man that deals this game. If this fool dies, he will be the second that Mr. Dawes has sent to the happy hunting ground within a month."

"Yer mean—yer mean men is killed like that!" Martin cried, leaving his mouth adroop as if to catch the answer.

Lee good-naturedly tapped his own revolver, thrust into a broad leather belt that was studded with silver pieces.

"In this country each man has to look out for himself, and if he's a quarrelsome cuss, he doesn't have to wait long to get buried. Have a drink, youngster?"

"I ain't quarrelsome, I ain't!"

Martin called it "quarle-s'm," but his meaning was clear.

The busy bartender greeted Mr. Lee respectfully by name—

"I thought you were out of the city, sir."

"I just went to Sacramento for a day," said Lee. "Came down on a little schooner. Just got in about sundown."

Lee tossed a buckskin pouch to the bar. The bartender, with an air of preoccupied haste, for customers were waiting, took a pinch of dust between finger and thumb, which he dropped into a dish on the shelf behind the bar.

What could be taken between finger and thumb, though one man's finger and thumb might be larger than another, passed in those free-handed days for a dollar.

"I sy, Mr. Lee, is there any gold left in this bloomin' country f'r some of us fellers wot's jus' come in?"

"Mountains of it!" Mr. Lee affirmed, encouragingly, at the same time handing the bag to Martin, so that he might for a moment hold a sack of real gold, feel its weight.

"Blimey! It's 'eavy as lead!"

"And some of it is soft as flour," said Mr. Lee, taking back the pouch.

"'Ow do yer get there? I come to get there, I did. An' I'm in a bloomin' 'urry, I am!"

Mr. Lee, in an amiable mood, explained that a gold hunter first went to Stockton or Sacramento, from where he took his departure for the mines. The fare to either place was about three ounces of gold. Gold was, roughly, $16 the ounce in San Francisco; less at the mines. The miner must have an outfit of shovel, pick, pan—pans at one time had been $16, but were now down to $2 or $3. In the early days—about six months before—even wooden washbowls had brought as high as $30. A pick was now $5. One must have blankets, boots—boots were $40 a pair—pans, grub.

"A man," said Mr. Lee with the carelessness of one who has thousands, "needs about $500 to outfit, right. It's hard work. You are not very strong."

"I'll do!" Martin answered with assurance.

"It would be best for you to have a pardner. You need a pardner anyhow. There are Indians. They pot the lone digger with half a chance. Mexican bandits are beginning to frequent the trails." The men who had previously lived in California and respected the Spanish Californians always spoke of the Spanish desperadoes as "Mexicans." "I know two men that washed out $4000 in three days, with a cradle."

"Wat's a bloomin' cradle?"

"Looks something like a baby's cradle, with a sieve in the bottom. Shovel in dirt. Pour in water. Rock the cradle. The gold

sifts to the bottom. Unless you make it yourself a cradle will cost about $200. And there is gold, lots of gold. Anybody can find it."

At that moment a man hurried up to Mr. Lee, saying:

"I've been looking all over for you, Lee. Mr. Tesla, whom we've been expecting, you know, came in today ready to do business. It's lucky you got in tonight. Other people—you can guess who—are trying to crowd you out of the deal. They are over to the Bella Union. Monsieur Max is over there too, waiting."

Lee and his friend walked off hurriedly.

A TIPSY miner of huge size arose from a bench at a monte table as the gambler's lookout tossed the markers from a heavy bag of dust, and placed the bag among the bank's heap of gold.

The burly miner, with an easy, almost cheerful air of unconcern, shoved his way through the encircling group and headed for the door. His legs were the least bit unsteady. In avoiding one man he bumped into Martin O'Day.

"Pardner, old world don't seem big enough for the two of us, eh?"

He paused, and with tipsy deliberation eyed the little cockney, who wore clothes intended for a man twice his size; then, said the miner with drunken earnestness—

"You've shrunk!"

"I ain't. I didn't dare grow big as you. Lots o' times I 'ad ter sleep in a barrel on rainy nights. An' if yer too big yer get yer feet wet. I'm pertykular wiv my feet, I am!"

The miner pondered the explanation judiciously and seemed satisfied.

"Now take me—William Burton, that's me. I'm the biggest ass in this barnyard full of big asses. Eight months ago I come down from the mines with my stake. Gambled, lost, sold my ticket to get back to the mines. Dug out another stake. Got as far as Sacramento. Lost it. Back to the mines. Dug out some more. Started for home. Got no home, but I started anyhow. Got to playin' here. Now broke. Haven't got any steamer ticket this time to sell. Don't know how I'll get back to the mines, but I got to go an' dig."

"Let me go wiv yer!"

Bill Burton eyed him with tipsy gravity, then admitted—

"You might be lucky. But I'm broke—"

As he spoke he fumbled about in his pockets and drew out a flabby buckskin bag, squeezing it through his hand.

"—all I got left. Just a pinch. You want to be my pard? I'm Bill Burton. No —— good. Broke."

"Yer all right. I'm wiv yer!"

"I was in here on a ship when the news hit—gold! The whole crew jumped for the mines. Made my stake three times. Plenty more up there. You furnish the outfit, we'll go pards. Here"—he thrust the flabby bag at Martin—"all I got. We're pards. Shake!"

They shook hands, settling the bargain; then Burton started off, suddenly humming.

"I sy," Martin ran after him. "I sy, where yer goin'!"

"Bed. Can't play. Can't drink. Can't do nothing but sleep when you're broke. Where you stoppin'?"

"I ain't found a plyce yet," said Martin.

"Come on with me, pard," said the miner and laid a forcible hand on Martin, nearly dragging him out of the Magnolia and across the Plaza, which, on nearly the whole of two sides and a part of the third was brilliantly fringed by the blazing, and never closed, doorways of the gambling houses.

The lodging houses being full when Burton, heavy with dust, came into the city, he had chanced upon a tent and carelessly paid four ounces for a week's rent. It was some four blocks from the plaza.

"We bunk here," he said, and pushed Martin through the door.

Burton lighted a lantern and hung it on a nail. He was too tall to stand upright and moved about as if crouching to spring on somebody.

The floor and corners were littered with odd scraps, among which Martin, with the eager deftness of one who has pawed ash barrels and alley rubbish, rummaged. He found a broken flint-lock rifle, a powder horn, a pouch heavy with bullets, a decayed rubber blanket, a half sack of wormy beans, empty cans.

There was but one bunk. Burton flung a bundle of blankets off it, saying:

"One thing, we got blankets. These are mine. I kept 'em for the ship. Give me a dollar or something. We'll flip to see who gets the bunk. The other fellow sleeps on the floor."

"I ain't got no bloomin' dollar," said Martin cheerfully. Then added hastily, remembering that their partnership was based on his being able to buy the outfit—"I don't sleep good on no bunk. Yer 'ave it, Billy. I won't 'ave it, I won't!"

Burton sat down, yawning prodigiously. He threw his boots, one after the other, across the room. Then tossed away his hat.

"'Night, little pard. Look out a rat don't lug you off—plenty of 'em big enough."

Burton fell back on the bunk, gave the blanket a swirl and, though it fell in a way that only partly covered his body, sighed deeply and almost at once began the regular deep breathing of one who sleeps soundly.

"Gor blimey! Where the —— bloomin' —— can I fin' money! I got ter 'ave it, I 'ave!"

Martin waggled his head doubtfully. Five hundred dollars, Mr. Lee had estimated. That in itself was wealth. He was skillful in evasions and explanations, but he knew that on the morrow, whatever his explanations, he would lose this big pardner if he did not have the money.

All that he had was the flabbily empty buckskin pouch which Burton had thrust into his hand; and now, getting close to the lantern, Martin pulled open the mouth of the pouch and peered hard. A few pinches of brilliant dust lay in the bottom. He shook some of it into his hand, and with inquiring finger poked at the dust.

Gold. Real gold. The stuff that would buy anything! Yet he had seen so much gold piled about and carelessly handled on the gambling tables—stacks of it, pouches of it—that for a moment he wondered how it could be so valuable.

He had hardly a vague idea as to what gold dust was worth, but he thought it must take a lot to make $500.

If a fellow was lucky at gambling——? Martin had never seen monte played before this night, but he had quite readily caught on to the simple game.

Martin weighed the bag thoughtfully in his small hand. It was light, very light.

"Heavy as lead," he remembered saying as he held the well filled pouch of the amiable Mr. Lee.

He licked his lips and swallowed with dry throat as an idea trembled through his mind. He moved closer and looked a little wistfully at his sleeping partner. But he also thought of Stewart Dawes, the tall, pale, cold gambler, who had shot a man as indifferently as he brushed the glint of gold dust from his dark sleeve.

Then he began to rummage among the litter of rubbish in a corner of the tent, and his thin impudent, pinched features had an odd look of determination.

VI

NIGHT and day the Magnolia ran its games and bar; and at midnight, though the crowd of loafers had thinned, men still hovered thickly about the tables.

In the city gold and silver coins were plentiful, though there were not nearly enough for the commerce; with the increase of miners gold dust became even in the city the medium of exchange as it was in the mines, where a gold coin was rarely seen.

When gambling with dust, a man put his bag on the table, stated the amount of his wager, and the lookout placed a marker against it. If the player was unlucky this bag would lie on the table until the number of markers showed that the entire contents of the bag had been lost. Gamblers, by the weight in their hands, were expert at guessing the amount and value of the dust.

Heavy play was on at the table where Stewart Dawes dealt. The betting of two men attracted the attention of many onlookers.

One of these was Col. Nevinson, a man of middle age, of striking appearance, smooth shaven except for a long black mustache. He wore a black soft hat, black cutaway coat, and flowing bow tie, and his height was accentuated by a haughty erectness.

He had reached San Francisco in the winter of '48, and was, therefore, an old-timer. No man had more diversified business interests than Nevinson; he speculated audaciously, particularly in the lumber trade; he owned the controlling interest in stores throughout the mines, had money invested in gambling houses and city property. Yet his chief interest was in politics. When California became a State he expected to be United States Senator. He was domineering, generous with his friends, high-handed, and regarded any man who opposed him as an enemy. When he wanted

something he would have it, or fight; and his wants were many.

He was almost constantly attended, some people said "guarded," by a slump-shouldered cadaverous fellow by the name of Bruce Brace, who almost invariably held his hands behind him.

Now he stood beside the colonel, but did not at all watch the play. He merely looked vaguely about over the heads of the onlookers. His eyes were dull as if covered with a sort of film, and he stared here and there with a seeming lack of interest in anything.

Col. Nevinson was drinking heavily, but with no apparent effect beyond a slight flush. Every few minutes a Chinaman came with a tray and bottle.

Low conversation went on, for some man was saying that somebody had just gone into Washington Hall, ordered the doors closed, and had all the inmates paraded. A pretty dollar such sport would cost!

Col. Nevinson, overhearing, demanded—

"Who is the fool?"

Nearly always he spoke with an air of anger, even to friends.

"Don't know, Colonel. A fellow they say that just rode in today. Made a winning at somebody's table. Then went crazy, I guess."

Stewart Dawes glanced toward the tale-bearer, but said nothing.

At the other side of the table another man of striking appearance was also playing heavily, and losing after a long run of good luck. He was a young slender Spaniard, straight as a tent pole. His name was a proud one, Don José Roderigo Velazquez de Sola. Except for the shadow of a smile, in which there was nothing pleasant, his face was a mask. In two hours he had not said a word.

The flicker of an impersonal smile hardly relieved the cold hauteur of his face, an almost youthful face.

He was richly dressed. His high sombrero was overlaid with gold braid; his velvet jacket fronted with gold buttons. From the top of his right boot the handle of a knife stuck up and, slung from his hip, in a way that a Spaniard seldom wore a gun, he carried a heavy ivory-handled revolver in a greasy holster. He wore it low down on his thigh, handle pointing backward.

NEAR midnight Martin O'Day wriggled through the onlookers and emerged at the elbow of the Spaniard.

"Make your game, gentlemen," said the lookout in a bored voice.

Bets were placed. Martin did not catch just what was the reason, but Dawes, placing aside his deck, moved his hand slightly toward the derringer at his elbow and said quietly to the Spaniard—

"Change your bet."

"Pardon, señor, my bet eet was down firs'."

"I said, *'Change your bet!'* " and the edge of Dawes' voice grew sharper, his hand moving nearer his gun.

The next instant he was looking into the muzzle of the heavy Colt's revolver.

Onlookers to right and left ducked, some going so far as the floor. Col. Nevinson pressed back, but did not dodge. Only Stewart Dawes remained indifferently motionless as the smile on the face of the young Spaniard deepened, and his voice, softly as a girl's said—

"Pardon, señor, I have not the wish to change the bet. You will plees deal!"

Dawes smiled coolly, and with a movement of wrist only turned his hand up, beaten. He had made a bad play; but he was gambler enough to lose coolly.

The Spaniard, with a smooth quick movement, returned the revolver to its holster, and the little cockney gaped at him in open-mouthed admiration.

"I," said Col. Nevinson angrily, though speaking to no one in particular, "have seen greasers whipped for less!"

The Spaniard's eyes gleamed. His lips parted over teeth tightly clenched. For a moment as if too full of rage for words, he glared at Nevinson. Bruce Brace noticed, his slack body stiffened, and the film seemed to leave his eyes; but his right hand remained behind him.

"Where, señor, where did you see that? A Spaniard wheeped! Where?" the Spaniard cried in furious excitement.

Nevinson looked at him contemptuously. It was well known that Nevinson did not like greasers, excepting of course Dona Elvira Eton.

"I just came down from the mines a few days ago, and they tell of one of your Dons who was pegged out and soundly whipped, sir!"

"Who, señor?" The Spaniard seemed almost beside himself; his voice had the menace of pain and anger. "Do you know who did that thing?"

Bruce Brace glanced expectantly toward the colonel; but Nevinson only said wrathfully—

"Who are you, sir, to question me! ——your soul, sir, what is it you want?"

"And you, señor, have you ever done that thing?"

"I," said Nevinson haughtily, "have struck whom I pleased, and when!"

"Ah," the Spaniard answered softly, "perhaps you plees, *now!*"

"If I did, you would have known it before this, sir!"

"So, then you do not plees. Ah!"

"Aw make your bets, gentlemen, make your bets," said the lookout.

Martin O'Day, from under his coat, raised a heavy buckskin bag and cautiously edged it on to the table.

"I'm playin' the free spot, wiv the gentleman 'ere," he said, gesturing with a thumb at the Spaniard.

Dawes glanced steadily for a moment at the small cockney, his large cap awry, his coat too large, upturned at the sleeves, his face underfed.

Dawes said nothing. There was much thievery in the city, and nimble fingers pulled many a pouch from the pockets of half-drunken miners. With his eyes on the cockney, Dawes lifted the sack, weighing it in his hand. He glanced down without interest. There was a rich sprinkling of gold dust on the mouth of the sack.

"Just under fifty ounces," said Dawes with expert carelessness.

"'Ow much it wurf?"

Dawes stared penetratingly, then again glanced at the sack—

"About eight hundred. All of it on the tray?"

Martin nearly collapsed. He had had no idea of weight, or of weight translated into dollars.

"'Arf of it! 'Arf of it!" he exclaimed anxiously.

"The game is made," droned the lookout, laying markers against Martin's sack.

The cards fell. In a moment the lookout swept the Spaniard's coins into the bank's pile, and shifted the markers to show that half of Martin's sack belonged to the bank.

"'Oly 'eaven!" said Martin, looking up reproachfully at the Spaniard.

In a state of chills-and-fever tenseness, Martin began to play against what remained of his sack. Twice he had to bet the last ten dollars allowed him by the lookout's accounting, but he won. Then he kept on winning. The Spaniard lost, Nevinson lost, but the cockney won until he had the bag on his side of the table and some gold coins in his hand. At last, desperately, for he was not getting anywhere by small bets, he risked the sack, all of it, on the deuce.

The Spaniard, with his last dollar gone, lifted the band from his sombrero and with no haste or irritation laid it on the table.

Dawes picked it up, idly examined it, said indifferently—

"Fifty dollars."

The Spaniard bet against the deuce, and lost. Martin won. His eager hands scraped in the gold, gold pieces all of it; he stuffed his capacious pockets until they were weighted with gold. He had nearly nine hundred dollars. He crammed the buckskin bag into a coat pocket.

The Spaniard glanced idly, with a faint suggestion of contempt at the cockney who was clawing the gold pieces into his pockets, then rolled a cigaret neatly, lighted it, and without a gesture or change of expression, turned away.

"Just a minute!" said Stewart Dawes.

The Spaniard turned with a flash of movement, but Dawes' hands were empty, though his right hand lay so close that it touched the butt of the derringer. From his chair he looked up coolly, without a sign of what he meant to say.

"Greaser," Dawes began evenly, "the next time you draw a gun on me, shoot! Because if—"

"Si, señor, with pleasure!" the Spaniard interrupted softly, his dark eyes brightly aglow. He smiled slightly and stood motionless, waiting.

Dawes eyed him dangerously, but being a thorough gambler, and patient, for the second time that night he realized that he had been beaten. This greaser was not like others, who could usually be humiliated because half the time they hardly understood what was being said and knew, besides, that they were unpopular with the crowd. But this fellow seemed ready for a fight with anybody and, if Dawes' memory served him

right, the gun this fellow carried was very much, even to the holster, like that of the Spanish-looking man who, earlier in the day, had hit his bank hard. Dawes had the good judgment to accept his luck, however much it hurt.

Nonchalantly he cut his cards and began shuffling.

There was hardly any one left at the table to play. The corpse-like Bruce Brace, having at last seen something on which his eyes rested with interest, had bent forward and whispered to Nevinson, who instantly stopped playing, reassuringly reached under his coat, touching something there; then, with Brace at his heels, pushed hurriedly through the crowd, toward the bar.

Martin followed the Spaniard, and a few yards from the table caught at his arm.

The Spaniard whirled, eyes narrowed, hand to hip; but his hand fell away and his eyes lost the glint of fierceness as he waited, but not as if likely to be interested.

"I sy, do yer need some chink, matey?"

The Spaniard looked puzzled and repeated doubtfully—

"Chee-ink? Chee-ink?"

"Blimey, sure!" said Martin, jingling his heavy pockets and grinning generously.

"No, señor, I do not borrow from Americanos."

"But yer broke. An' sy, I ain't no Amircan-ho. I'm Henglish. Stryght! I been lucky. You ain't. An' I like yer."

"Your pardon, señor, no. With your luck an' a leetle cour-age, señor—the bank, you would break eet. You queet while winning!"

"Huhn? Sy, look 'ere. I ain't no bloomin' 'ero, but I sy—I'll show yer wot I done!"

He nervously yanked at his buckskin pouch, dragged it from his pocket, opened it, thrust it out.

"Look 'ere! Nothin' but——"

It was dust all right, just plain dust off the street mixed with bullets which gave the sack weight.

"Ah yes, señor. Veree clevar. You had nothing to lose."

"Nothin' to lose! Yer crazy. That gambler bloked' 'ave shot me quicker'n 'ell! I was bettin' me bloody life. I'm hofferin' to loan—"

"Pardon, señor, no," said the Spaniard firmly, but, in a reserved way, friendly.

Even as they talked together high voices, raw with anger, came from across the room.

Col. Nevinson's voice, high pitched and menacing, could be heard—

"—you sir, —— your soul, have interfered with my affairs on every side—"

"And you," a forceful contemptuous voice answered, "don't keep your affairs clean enough to welcome having them looked into, do you?"

"—— your soul, sir, apologize!"

"You, sir, can go to the ——!"

"Draw and defend yourself!" cried Nevinson.

The words were not fully spoken before shots rang out, again and again and again.

Men whooped in alarm and threw themselves to the floor, under tables and benches as shot followed shot.

Then, through the smoke, two men were seen standing upright—Col. Nevinson and Bruce Brace. Nevinson erect, gun at his side, his left hand fumbling absently at his right shoulder, where he had been hit.

On the floor, before the bar, sprawled full length, face down, dead, with a gun that still smoked in his fingers, lay Hubert Lee.

Suddenly in the tense silence that followed the reverberant crashing of the guns, Monsieur Max sent up a torrent of French profanity and lamentation. His voice crackled. His hands smote and clawed the air. And the crowd that rose from under benches and reappeared through doorways, pressed in close to the bar and stared—not at the body of Hubert Lee, but at the great mirror, hopelessly marred with a star-like blot, almost in the center.

Monsieur Max abruptly stopped cursing. With a flourish he pulled a silk handkerchief from his sash and grinning, shouted triumphantly—

"Oh oh oh—pooh! It is not for me to give one ——! At ze twelve o'clock tonight, monsieurs, ze Magnolia I sold him to ze gentleman, Monsieur Tesla. It is for Monsieur Tesla to do ze cuss words!"

VII

A FEW minutes later Col. Nevinson appeared at the rooms of Dona Elvira Eton. He pushed by the negro girl who opened the door, and, stormy with excitement and triumph, cried—

"I've settled with Lee!"

"Lee! I didn't know he was in town!"

Elvira exclaimed from the high-backed teak chair where she had been reading a Spanish novel. She did not rise, but her dark eyes widened with a moment's look of pleasurable excitement as Nevinson continued, striding toward her—

"It had to come! He got me here—" touching his right shoulder, as yet undressed—"but I put a piece of lead into his heart!"

Nevinson, with frowns and a manner of angry tenseness, together with some harsh names for Lee, remained standing and told of the encounter. He mentioned too that Bruce Brace had fired.

"—Brace missed. Hit the new mirror. Thunder strike his soul! That glass cost money, and now I mean to have an interest in the Magnolia! By ——, I get what I want! I'd told Bruce not to draw—not unless I was down. But when he saw me stagger—touched here—" he gestured at his shoulder—"he drew. That gun of his, no bigger than a toy! Can almost cover it in his palm. He just grins when I laugh at the thing—a toy! Yet he's done work with it—two men. Good friend, Brace. Lee and I had to have it out, blast his soul! Dressed like a greaser—that hat! Pah! I thoroughly hated the man—"

Elvira's attention soon withdrew from the colonel's story. Shootings were very common, almost incredibly so. At first, when she had come to the city, to hear of them had been exciting; now the colonel was being tiresome.

As with everything else she owned, she occasionally grew tired of him. He was valuable as a friend, and generous toward her; in a way generous toward whomever were his friends. Elvira knew, or thought she did, all the strings to his rash explosive character, and could touch any at will; excepting, it seemed, the one that controlled his use of that offensive word, greaser. Nevinson appeared to hate everything Spanish, excepting herself. Hubert Lee had worn a sombrero. She had not known Lee at all. No doubt he too would have been generous, toward her at any rate. All men were. She thought of that other man, Hales, who too wore a sombrero and had inquired for Hubert Lee.

Nevinson strode here and there about the room, at times putting his hand for a moment to his shoulder; he talked, justifying his grievances with a detailed recital of the many things Lee had done and tried to do. Lee had shouldered him out of the deal to buy the Magnolia; or tried to. He had put Lee—blast his greaser soul!—out of the way!

ELVIRA laid her book aside and picked up a silver-backed mirror, formerly her mother's. Also preoccupiedly, she examined her face, her hair, her pendant earrings; she touched a stray wisp here and there, rubbed at what appeared to be the beginning of a wrinkle, then laid the mirror aside, or rather to one side, face up. Listlessly she began to roll a cornhusk cigaret, and leaned over a little, absently looking at herself in the mirror.

Elvira knew nothing of her father, except that his name was Eton and he had been English; there the matter ended, and she was not curious. But her mother had been a remarkable woman, understanding the intricacies of a man-owned world; and was long and well known, if not entirely reputably, in Havana, where many slave ships outfitted for the long dash to the Gold and Ivory Coast; and such as escaped British gunboats brought back profits to share-holders. The mother spoke English fluently. About the only scholastic requirement she imposed on Elvira was that tongue, the reason being that, as Señora Eton said, the English and Yankee are such men as give, give, give—if the woman is beautiful.

Among much else that was priceless, though hardly scholastic, the mother had taught Elvira that the only things worth while to a woman were her beauty, other people's money, and that men should be kept underfoot—where they belonged.

This remarkable mother had been blessed with courage as well as with wisdom. Smallpox crept into the city, terrifying everybody; Señora Eton's face was irreparably blighted; then the redoubtable woman who had taught her daughter to live, showed her how to die. Quite calmly, with a mirror in her hand, as if from it receiving the fatal sentence, Señora Eton drank a glass of poisoned wine, and so departed from a world where, according to her simple beliefs, a woman's face was more to be valued than her life.

The news of gold in California, at the time regarded as a Spanish country, had

reached Havana when Elvira was ready to leave the city. She had lost favor with certain persons of municipal importance; and an immediate departure was, if not necessary, at least desirable. She had been accompanied by Tota, a pretty negress who spoke Spanish only, and by an odd scoundrel who went under the name of Ferdinand. He was some sort of Spaniard, but could make himself understood in almost any tongue.

This Ferdinand was a broad-chested, shaggy-headed, but beardless rascal; a world wanderer, who had done everything, been everywhere—on slave ships, in theatrical troupes, as musician and performer, with robbers ashore and afloat, and in many prisons. In his youth the officials of Cadiz had clipped his ears, the better to know him if they should meet again. Frenchmen had branded his shoulder and sent him to the hulks; but, as he said, this was no place for a man of a roving nature so, having filed his chains in secret, he departed, headlong into the water at night and was reported drowned.

It would take more than water, apparently more than rope, to end his life.

In Havana one afternoon, Elvira, attended by a rather elderly military personage, sat on a balcony to witness the hanging of a half-dozen rogues. Executions fascinated her, and at that time they were something of a holiday event in Havana, as formerly in London and Paris. The prisoners were being brought to the gallows in a wooden cart drawn by oxen. One of these was a powerful fellow, who, though his hands and feet were tied, stood upright against the wooden railing of the cart, joked with the crowd and sang snatches from a witty ballad about Sweet Mistress Hemp who had a ready caress for good stout men.

"Don't let them garrote that man!" said Dona Elvira to the important personage who at the time was very much interested in pleasing her.

He was a gallant man, this official, with much authority. He wrote a dozen words on a small pad taken from his pocket and gave the paper to an orderly. A few minutes later, amid the noisy joy of the crowd, Ferdinand was led away, reprieved.

Later, Elvira, accompanied by the official, visited Ferdinand in his small cell where he was ironed to the wall. Learning what she had done for him, he fell on his knees before her, called her an angel, and swore that he was persecuted only because he was an honest man and the world was full of rogues. There was, even then, a vague, good-natured insincerity, a kind of twinkling, in his tone that interested her and caused even the official to smile tolerantly.

"My poor man, how could you sing on your way to death!"

"Queen of Angels, only evil men fear death!"

Elvira learned from authoritative sources that he was a thorough rogue; and some said that he was not a Spaniard at all, but a Basque. He sang well and could play any stringed instrument that was ever placed into his hands. But his most distinctive accomplishment, unless it was that of breaking prison, was that of knife-thrower. He had once traveled about Europe with mountebanks, going from fair to fair. At ten paces he could send four knives rapidly, one after the other, into a playing card, and sink the steel of each an inch or more into solid oak.

At this time Dona Elvira had money and friends of importance. She was pleased to slip a little gold and a few smiles here and there among certain persons who looked after the welfare of the city and, though a notorious rogue, Ferdinand passed from a reprieve to a pardon.

At first she tried to make a sort of house servant of him; but though always, or nearly always, cheerful, he was untamable. She did not grow tired of him so much as almost afraid of him. He was enigmatic, talkative, but in a way that she could not penetrate, secretive. He never asked her for anything, and more than once he gave her money—as if trying to pay his debt. She did not dare ask how he got it. Always he spoke of her as "the good Dona;" always he was respectful, even at such times as she, in a passion, might call him a thief and gallows fruit, and he would greatly frighten her by his steady stare and rapid speech that ran inflectionally, all in a breath, from humbleness to menace and back again. She was relieved when he occasionally disappeared, and she was always pleased to see him when he returned; yet frequently she had anxiously thought of denouncing him to the authorities for she did not understand him, but knew that he was

dangerous. He spoke Spanish even with a slight accent, as he did English and French. She felt that he ought to be more of a grateful slave than he was.

But Elvira had been very glad that he was at hand when she wished to to leave Havana. He, too, was ready and eager to reach California.

They had no sooner got to San Francisco than Ferdinand, with a guitar over his shoulders and a knife in his belt, set out for the mines. He returned shortly without callouses on his hands and with much gold. In a little while he was off for the mines again, returning soon. California, he said, was a great country. He placed a sum of money in the good Dona's hands and asked her to buy for him a certain portion of this wonderful land, naming the place—an old Spanish ranch—not far from San Francisco. Ferdinand could not read nor write. He was very insistent about this ranch. Whatever it cost he said that he would get the money. She even visited the *rancho*, and found it an isolated and rather dilapidated place.

She inquired what on earth he could want of it, and learned that Ferdinand was, or at least said he was, preparing a home for his old age; this being about as near the truth as anybody could ever get out of him.

She had, as usual with anything like business, turned to Col. Nevinson in the matter of buying this ranch; and he always put himself out to accommodate his friends.

Elvira also thought California a great country, but she did not look so far forward as to see old age. Old age, like her own death, was something of which she would never let herself think.

She restlessly craved excitement. Her instincts were, if not dramatic, at least theatrical. Always, hidden at her breast, she wore a dagger of pretty workmanship; one that on occasion she had drawn, theatrically, but never used. In certain moods it pleased her to see men shrink before her blazing eyes and that gleaming sliver of steel. She had been tempted to try this on Col. Nevinson, but he was too a good friend, too entirely hers, to risk losing; besides she hardly thought that he would shrink. She spent her idleness in reading Spanish novels, revengeful of plot, through which women moved, artful and unforgiving, with jeweled daggers, worn secretly.

Even here in San Francisco, where there was little to buy and much gold, she was wasteful of money, but resourceful, very resourceful. For instance, at a time when the city was bare of furniture she had been able to get nearly all the furnishings she wanted—the king's palace would hardly have supplied her with *all* that she wanted, at least for any length of time—through Col. Nevinson, who bought the stuff from the captains and caretakers of the crewless ships out on the bay.

NOW, having lighted a second cigaret, Dona Elvira sat back, blew the smoke upward and with slumbrous-eyed disinterest listened to Col. Nevinson.

"—I found out that he was telling here and there that I brought her to California——"

"Her! Who?" Elvira asked quickly, with something of jealous alarm. "Who are you talking about?"

"Ann Hales."

"Oh!" She sprang up, alert, interested, sensitively ready to be jealous.

"Oh, what?" demanded the colonel bruskly. "What do you know of her?"

"Nothing, my Colonel. But somewhere —oh, quite vaguely—it seems I have heard —that name, haven't I? I wonder where?"

"Lee told two or three persons. By god, sir, I'll call any man to account for lies about me! Or woman, sir! Or woman! She lied about me, too."

"What did she say, my Colonel?"

Elvira, watching his lips as if to catch the words before she heard their sound, stroked tenderly at his coat collar. Her fingers touched something moist. She jerked her hand back, then hastily rubbed her fingers on his sleeve. She felt a pleasurable slight shudder, and for a moment hardly listened to what he was saying, but looked intently at the moist red stain she had touched.

"Why, sir, she said—or at least that blasted greaser of a Lee claimed she said that I, I, sir! brought her to California. She happened to be on the ship, that was all. I swear to—I won't swear to anybody, sir. I simply state the truth. She was on the ship. True, I had known her before, but I had nothing to do, nothing at all with bringing her to California, or with what happened to her after she got here. No, sir!"

"Ah," said Elvira, inscrutably.

Col. Nevinson looked at her suspiciously:

"Why do you say that, 'Ah'?"

"Ah, no reason, my Colonel. What happened to her after she got here? Tell me more of her. Where is she now?"

"There is little to tell. She was married to a man she did not love. An Army officer who left her much alone—with good reason, too. Any man would soon have left her. She was crazy!"

"Ah-ah? Continue, my Colonel, dear. What became of her? Where is she now?"

"Fire and ——, woman! You are not jealous!"

"I? Jealous? Of who? No no! I like romances, to read them—to hear them. Tell me more. This husband of hers, what of him? May he not come to California too—looking for her—for *you?*

"He is dead—not that I would care," Col. Nevinson added quickly, giving one end of his mustache an upward twist. "I did not bring her. She had gone to the devil long before. Drank. I soon lost sight of her, here."

"So fickle, you men," Elvira murmured playfully. "But now, where is she?"

"Why do you care?"

"When I read a novel I read to the end, even the dull ones, my Colonel."

"She went from bad to worse, and is now in some sort of lodging house. Sydney woman keeps it, I hear, down by Clark's Point. She was for a time in Washington Hall. Got thrown out of there." Col. Nevinson shook his head as he said it. Wretched indeed was the woman who must fall lower than the lowest of those in Washington Hall.

"And she was beautiful, once?"

"Once, yes. I should say she was! But never a good woman, never! Her husband was killed during the war and—"

"Ah, perhaps that's how I have heard the name? There was much in the newspapers at one time—I read of it in Havana—about a Captain Hales who fought a duel between the armies. Yes, yes, I remember. He was a scout and—"

At any time it rather irritated Col. Nevinson to hear other men praised; and with an abrupt finality he said—

"All I know of him is that he was killed."

"But many men have been reported dead that lived, and everybody comes to California. What if he should appear?" asked Elvira slowly, but thrilled.

"I don't take a step backward from any man, sir!"

"I wonder—" Elvira murmured, thinking of the dark horseman.

"You what!"

"I wonder, is he dead? Are you sure?"

"She got a pension. He was a captain, but not—"this a little contemptuously—"of a military family. Leather merchants. Lee was a hide buyer here in California for the firm. Somehow he found out who she was, that she was here—and meddled. —— his soul!"

"I see," said Elvira.

"What do you see?" he asked sharply.

"Many things, my Colonel. Hubert Lee may have sent word East, to her people—to the husband's people I mean and——"

"What are you talking about? Why would Lee do that, anyhow?"

"Oh, to make trouble for you! Don't you see? Supposing, just supposing, the husband should come?"

"Let him come!"

"Ah—" admiringly, or seemingly so—"you fear no man!"

"No man, sir!"

"But women, ah?" she asked, teasingly.

"You—yes, of course," he said twisting one side of his mouth into a sort of smile, meant pleasantly.

"Where is she, this Ann Hales? Where did you say?"

"Why do you care? She is nothing."

"May I not be curious?"

"The place is called the Red Lamb. So Lee said. He told a fellow that. The fellow told me. I don't know."

"Red Lamb, what a name! And I *am* curious. You say she was once beautiful?"

"She was. Yes. No doubt about it. She was, once."

"And rich? Her husband was rich? Rich family, now?"

"Very rich. Very. So I heard," he said without interest, putting his hand to his injured shoulder.

"And this husband, was he handsome, Colonel? What did he look like?"

"Never saw him."

"The name Hales, Colonel, is it a common name in this country?"

"Why the —— are you so full of questions?"

"I am curious. I have nothing to do with myself but be curious. Hales is a common name, Colonel?"

"There are Hales in the East. Lots of them."

"It is so common then that—ah, you don't jump when you hear it?"

"*Jump!* Jump? No, I don't jump! Not when I hear any man's name!"

"Not—" at times with playful malice she struck the chords that made him explosive—"when you know he is dead."

"What's the matter with you tonight? How dare you, woman, say a thing like that to me!"

"Ah—" humbly—"pardon, my Colonel. I but played. Come, we will sit over here, close together, and you shall tell me about this woman you once loved, when she was pretty."

"No," he said, a little soothed, but still irritated. "No, you're in one of your womanish moods tonight. I'm going to a doctor."

She went to the door so graciously with him, was so soothingly tender, that he was tempted to linger.

"Don't, my Colonel, remember when your Elvira has been naughty and teased."

She kissed him with the clinging insistence of a woman who means to be loved whether or not the man is willing; and he broke away good-naturedly, saying—"Devil!"

Elvira pushed the door closed and stared excitedly, at nothing—

"Devil I am, and can call the dead! Jealous? Ah-ah, of him? Ho, what a fool to think it! With him I can do anything and for as long as I want. But Señor Dick Hales—ah? Rich, very rich and handsome. What a fool she must have been! Tota! Tota!"

"Yes, Dona—yes!" said Tota, entering anxiously.

Elvira picked up the mirror and looked into it as she spoke—

"Get me to bed, Tota. I must sleep well. Tomorrow is important. When we meet a second time the Señor Dick will be more polite, I warrant you. And she, that Hales woman, was once beautiful. I wonder, blonde or brunette? I forgot to ask."

VII

BILL BURTON slept late and awakened hungry; but late as it was, Martin, huddled into a lump under the blanket, still snored. The big miner shook him out of the blanket. Martin awakened with groping gestures, pawing about him to make sure that he had not merely dreamed of winning from Stewart Dawes' table.

He tried to tell Burton about it, but Burton was hungry, interested in the story, but more interested in beefsteak and eggs. Having gold, winning or losing it, was an old story to him.

Burton, taking strides as if he wore seven league boots instead of cowhide, led the way. The little cockney, with repeated rushes, tried to keep by his side, but could do hardly more than follow with a sort of hurried-stumbling over the rough ground.

From somewhere thin piercing cries reached them. Burton stopped with a jerk, his heels planted at the edge of a bank down which he was ready to jump. He turned his head all about, curious, uncertain, trying to tell from where the sound came.

"Wot's up?"

"Don't you hear it?"

"Blime, 'ow yer goin' 'elp 'earin' of it! I 'ear a baby squallin'!"

Burton turned and walked uncertainly in the direction that Martin pointed; and after a few steps stopped.

"That's a baby sure! Wonder what's the matter with it?"

"Bellyhake," said Martin, as if he knew about babies.

"Down here somewhere."

Burton went forward with an air of awkward caution, as if not quite sure whether or not he ought to go; then, pointing with a gesture of discovery at a lean-to affair of pine boards.

"In there!"

The baby wailed as if in the pain that is greater than death.

"What's wrong, you reckon?" Burton asked, peering hard as if sure that Martin was better informed about babies than himself.

"It's sick."

Burton swore in vague protest, then went close to the lean-to, bent his head, listened. He raised a fist that could have smashed in a barrel, hesitated, knocked timidly. He stepped back quickly as if a little afraid of what he had done.

With scrape and tug the ill-fitting door opened and a woman peered out.

Her hair was down her back. She was young, but her face had the weariness of hard work and privation. Her gray eyes stared anxiously. The baby continued

with wail on wail. She held a wet cloth in her hand. Her dress was torn, worn, dirty.

From within the shack a man's voice, now weak, but suggesting a powerful voice diminished by sickness, asked—

"Who be it, Hetty?"

"What you folks want?" she asked doubtfully, with the harsh nasal inflection of the backwoods.

"Ma'am, we ain't wanting—we just—Ma'am is there anything us fellows can do?"

"Who be it, Hetty? What he be wantin' of us?"

The baby screamed, scream on scream.

"Ezekiel, these folks ask if they can help usens!" she said blankly, incredulous.

"Yes ma'am, that's sure it!" Burton affirmed, loudly.

The voice of Ezekiel proclaimed as if to a congregation:

"The merciful man doeth good to his own soul." Then in weak eagerness— "Ask 'em in, Hetty. 'Vite 'em right in!"

She stepped aside, nervously glancing about the small rude shelter, and Burton, crouching as if to enter a low cave, came in with embarrassed slowness.

A thin gaunt man, of powerful, bony frame, lay on two boards placed on boxes. His eyes were dark and sunken. He was bearded like a young prophet. One thin blanket was his covering. The baby, amid some clothing in a crate, waved tiny fists and with eyes tightly shut yelled as if in fury at the injustices of this world.

"Just look at that little dickens!" said Burton, admiringly.

"My good man is powerful sick," the woman answered.

"Neighbor, you *do* look pretty peak-ed."

"Friend," answered the sick man, "it is the punishment of the Lord."

"He's a preacher," said Hetty wistfully, glancing toward him. Then, abruptly—"We're Methodist."

"You look —— hard up too," the miner blurted.

The Rev. Ezekiel Preble, with passionate fervor answered—

"He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house!"

He lay on his back, and could not move. He was full of fever, but filled too with the deep inner fire that has inflamed prophets.

"He's a powerful good man," the woman muttered anxiously, looking at Martin.

In the midst of the baby's crying the preacher pitching his voice as if from a pulpit, explained—

"I come to Californy drawn more by the lust of harlot gold than by a burnin' to do the work of Gada'mighty;" and, in a tone of approval, added, "His wrath has visited me!"

"What's you need's a doctor, neighbor."

The mother had stooped to the baby, lifted it, but the baby continued to scream, beating the air with its fists.

"I endure suff'rin' for the sin o' covet'-ness!"

"He's got bowel trouble," said the woman, swaying the baby up and down.

"I ain't seen a baby in five years," Burton told her. "That is, not a real one. Indians have babies up to the mines."

"The wrath has descended on my son," droned the preacher.

"Babies ain't no right to suffer!" said Burton.

"The poor is hated even by his own neighbors, but the rich hath many friends," said the preacher.

"Christians ort o' be pore," Mrs. Preble put in helplessly. "Not hanker after vanities."

"All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again!"

"Ezekiel!" she protested timidly.

"Ain't nobody come near you folks?" Burton asked.

"We come with neighbors from York State, but they lit out fer the mines yesterday," said the woman.

"How much better to get wisdom than gold," moaned the preacher.

"Ma'am—" Burton was edging backward toward the door—"here's some money—little pard, shell out! An' that ain't all, neither. There'll be some folks up here to help you pretty soon!"

He ducked backward and out, and hurried off toward the Plaza.

TO BE CONTINUED

HALF-KNOWN HEROES

by Charles Nicholls Webb

HALF-LEGENDARY, half-historical, their careers only handed down by word of mouth, a host of minor traders, trappers, voyageurs, *coureurs du bois* and prospectors move through the story of the old Northwest. Those who left the most complete chronicles of their wanderings were either too modest to be just or too romantic to be veracious.

Ordinarily, men of action are not writing men. When, like Captain John Smith, they "take their pens in hand" it may be reluctantly and under pressure or solely for the sake of publicity.

Many of the legendary figures of the Northwest intrigue us by the veil of mystery they wear. There was "Wolf Hunter" Graham, whose exploits in southwestern Wisconsin were of the sort to make a group of corner-store patriarchs cackle rather than stir the interest of a student of history. He was merely the mighty hunter to whom the pioneers chose to attribute every remarkable feat of marksmanship that came to their attention. Similarly, Paul Bunyan, the lumberjack's myth, may have started out as a normally constituted but somewhat unusual woodsman in point of strength or performance.

"Greasy" Reed was a story-teller—a mighty liar rather than a mighty hunter—and, as such, his fame is handed down. He lived so close to our own times that there are men now alive who sat in his cabin and heard his monstrous tales of hunting—stories of impossible feats invariably followed by the modest declaration, "and it wa'n't a good day for huntin', neither." The old Munchausen's favorite attitude was to lean back in his chair, with eyes closed and head resting against the wall. His youthful hearers would slip out of the cabin one by one, leaving the old fellow talking away to an empty room.

Back still farther, lived the trader, Grant, who gave his name to a river and a county of the state of Wisconsin, and the story of whose life is fragmentary even in the legend. For instance, he is said to have owned a lead mine or rather a cache containing an enormous quantity of lead for which prospectors have searched unsuccessfully many times.

The story goes that he traded with the Indians, particularly in southern Wisconsin, and so impressed the savages that they thought he possessed supernatural powers. Grant is said to have worn a copper kettle, close to his head under his cap and, on one occasion, is supposed to have owed his life to this peculiar habit of dress. He was overtaken by a band of hostile Indians, the leader of which brought his tomahawk down upon his head with all strength. The only immediate result of the impact was a metallic sound and the astounded Indians threw themselves on the ground with the exclamation, "*Manitou!*"

Ever afterward the Indians regarded the trader as a God, exactly as they had regarded the explorers, Radisson and Groseilliers, in the seventeenth century.

Who Grant was and where he came from is not known. B. W. Brisbois, writing for the collections of the Wisconsin Historical Society thinks he may be identified with a Canadian trader of Scottish descent, Cuthbert Grant, who led a ragged army of woodsmen in the fighting between the fur companies; that, however, is merely conjectural. His name is perpetuated by a river and a county but history does not furnish a single corroborated statement regarding his career.

BROWN KURVENAL

A Complete Novelette

by

H. Bedford Jones

Author of "South, West and North," "The Star Goes North," etc.

I WAS sitting with Lawton on the veranda of the club, when Captain Tubbs came along with the Malay. Thus I had a personal and perhaps a bit irritated insight into this end of the story, and the remainder came to me afterward from Lawton and other sources.

Old Tubbs took off his helmet and mopped his hairless skull, then jerked a thumb at the hulking, brown figure behind him. The Malay was still standing.

"Lawton," he said, "I've brought a boy for you. Never another like him. He speaks no English. Wants to go into the hills with you. Best quartermaster I ever had."

Lawton looked young and was not; he looked gentle and was not; he looked lazy and was not. All the same, his gray eyes were wide apart; and he was slow to believe ill of others; and he was very new to Borneo. He could speak a little low Malay, no Dyak. He looked at the standing man, not small and trim and dish-faced like most Malays, but a shaggy and scowling figure.

"I am going up into the hills," said Lawton slowly, "with Tuan Thorsen. We are not smuggling. We have government authority. At the same time, the hill country is never very safe. Do you wish to go as my own man, serving me?"

"Yes," said the Malay, the one word. I leaned forward, a bit heated.

"Is that a proper way of speaking? Is it the custom to remain standing in the presence of your master and other white tuans?"

The brown fellow looked at me with his scowling glance. Captain Tubbs cleared his throat and spoke up rather anxiously.

"Give us a chance, you chaps! He don't mean anything by it. His way, that's all. He's not one of your crawly kind, but he won't lie."

"If I hire you," said Lawton, "you will be faithful to me?"

"Yes," said the Malay.

"Do you know the hills?"

"Yes. And the sea. I have been a *nakhoda*."

This put a new light on it. The Persain word is applied by the Malays to one who both owns and navigates his ship, a title of much respect. Just then Thorsen strolled out on the veranda and halted in astonishment at sight of a native standing instead of sitting. Thorsen was a big fellow, burly and yellow-haired, laughing most of the time though seldom with mirth. He had a heavy hand with every one beneath him.

"Is this a sultan coming to visit us?" he sneered. "Sit down, you dog!"

The brown man scowled at him and did not move. Lawton held up a hand.

"One minute, Thorsen. I'm taking on this boy. He's an odd type, but faithful."

"Maybe," said Thorsen. "We're not going on a tourist jaunt with a bodyguard of Rajah Brooke's soldiers, are we? No. We're going where they use *sumpitan* darts

on whites. You got to make the brown —— respect you or it's all up."

"This man will respect me," said Lawton. "Now, you have full charge of every one else, so suppose you leave my own servant to me. If you think he's disrespectful, you need not speak to him. If he inspires the other men with insolence, I'll dismiss him. I think you'll find they will be a little afraid of him."

"You're crazy," said Thorsen. "Ask any one if I'm not right, huh?"

He poked a thumb at me, and I nodded.

"You're right."

Lawton lighted a fresh cigaret and smiled in his lazy manner.

"I'm stubborn," he said. "And I know a man when I see one. Come here, Malay."

The brown man stepped up to him and looked him in the eye.

"You are engaged. Tuan Tubbs will arrange the terms with me. Your name?"

"Inchi 'La-uddin."

"I give you another name. It is Kurvenal. So was named an ancient warrior, very faithful to his lord. It is a name of honor."

"Allah reward you, tuan. I am no man's servant but yours."

"I think that is true," said Lawton. "You may go."

Kurvenal looked us all in the eye with a sweeping glance, bowed his head slightly, and stalked away. Even Captain Tubbs looked a little uneasy, since the man's independence was very marked here at the club. Thorsen called for a drink and dropped into a chair.

"You'll regret it," he said.

"Perhaps," agreed Lawton lazily. "I think not."

Thorsen had been a long while in Borneo but had never been able to manage things on any very large scale until now, though he knew the Dyak country better than most and had been where no other white men ever penetrated. He had the strength of four men in his splendid body, and Lawton was lucky to get him as a partner.

Lawton had been in Sumatra, then up in Yunnan, where he made quite a pile. He came to Borneo thinking to turn it into a fortune. The chances were good, as he stood very high with the government. Camphor and gold dust he must turn in, of course, but there were other things. Thorsen could get them if any man could, now that he had capital and trade goods with which to operate.

I wondered, and others wondered, how the two men would get on together, and concluded they would make a go of it. Not every man got on with Thorsen, but Lawton had a quiet way of being blind to irritating things, and was not the type to interfere where he did not know the country. He had given Thorsen full charge of affairs, at least temporarily. The only danger was lest Thorsen might come to have a contempt for him, missing the steel beneath the calm poise.

No one could blame Thorsen for distrusting the Malay. This Kurvenal was utterly unlike most of his race—an outcast, perhaps. He was very square and powerful, with a sullen scowl and a peculiar shaggy appearance; nor did he chew betel paste, for his teeth were white and firm. He never spoke except when addressed, outside prayer hours, and had absolutely no respect for any one in word or look. Not that he was deliberately insolent. It was simply a natural independence, never a good thing in a country where white men are accustomed to being treated as demigods, and exact such treatment.

So the two partners got off up-river, and no word came from them for a while.

II

IT IS a fallacious belief of young women and stay-at-homes that good folk do no wrong. Novels foster this notion and cinemas religiously nourish it. A character is labeled good or bad, and never departs from that line, except for godlike causes. Pish and tush! You and I know better. Only a poor angelic weakling would ever be like that. And Kurvenal, our brown Kurvenal, was far from a weakling.

Two days after the party left the boats behind and plunged into the hill country, Kurvenal, bringing up the rear of the line with Lawton, disappeared and did not return for a matter of two hours. When he appeared, he was carrying a small pottery jar, and there was a dark stain on his *sarong*.

"So you've been killing and looting?" asked Lawton, chiefly in jest.

"Yes," said Kurvenal.

"Eh?" Lawton now saw the stain on the silk to be blood. "Is this true?"

"Yes," said Kurvenal, and gave him the

pottery jar. "This holds something more precious than gold, tuan."

Lawton examined it, found it to contain a dark, sticky paste of horrible odor, and frowned.

"What is it?"

"Cure for the poison that these infidels use. It is impossible to buy it from them, so I took it. No one will pursue us, by Allah."

Lawton did not like the implication, but said nothing. Thorsen remained ignorant of it.

They were going through the higher jungle, heading for the hills, with plenty of Dyak bearers. They followed a native runway through the forest, a worn groove of a path, knee-deep in most places, with here and there a little mound of stones or a Dyak signal. All this while Kurvenal served Lawton impeccably, a perfect servant in all ways except that he never cringed. He knew the forest and hill country, spoke Dyak fluently, and was of high value to the entire party.

He did not get on with Thorsen. There was no surface collision, because Thorsen had far too much sense, but evidently he was irked by the Malay's independent manner. It did not spread among the other men, however. They seemed afraid of Kurvenal. This surly, shaggy Malay, so different from most of his flat-faced race, so thoroughly acquainted with their language and customs and country, inspired them with a species of terror. Lawton heard them saying that upon him was a curse, and he himself divined a certain tragedy in the man, something at once piteous and terrible, as if Kurvenal's surly independence were but part of a fight against some impending doom.

Still, Lawton told himself all this was no more than fancy, and pushed it aside from his mind. He lectured Kurvenal, and the latter remained entirely respectful toward Thorsen, in his own fashion, but so far as possible avoided the big blond leader.

Thorsen was heading for a definite point, trying to reach a certain village of Golong Dyaks whom he knew. Once there, as he explained, they could pick up a lot of hard camphor immediately and send it back by their bearers to the trading post on the river. Then he and Lawton would go on to where they could find some stones. Lawton agreed in his quiet way. He was quite content to leave everything to Thorsen and remain a colorless nonentity, so long as the expedition got results.

All this changed, however, when they reached the Golong village.

It was sunset. Their escort had been hammering a brass gong ever since daybreak, at intervals, and all day long gongs had been sending answers from the hills. A queer clang of sound, reverberating over the jungle, lifting and thinning into echoes, carrying code word that not even Thorsen could interpret. By this time the entire country for a hundred miles around knew that white men were coming to the Golong village, for prying eyes can see and thundering gongs can speak, and there is no privacy in the hills.

Royally welcomed for the sake of Thorsen, formerly known here, they filed into the Golong village. By this time Lawton was accustomed to the large houses, built of iron-wood poles, and the notched logs by which one climbed to the entrance. When the biggest house was turned over to the visitors, he took one of the rooms and told Kurvenal to unpack his things. The leeches had been bad that day, and Lawton had kept his puttees sudsed with carbolic soap, it being impossible to avoid the climbing horrors otherwise, and now he wanted a change of clothes. Instead of obeying, Kurvenal vanished and did not come back until the morning. He did not lie; he had been drunk and disreputable.

Lawton was taken aback by this absolute frankness. Before he recovered, Thorsen came striding up with big news, so that he dismissed Kurvenal for the moment, nor did the matter come up again for punishment. Events followed too swiftly.

"Two hill men out here to see us," said Thorsen abruptly, a hint of excitement in his blue eyes. "Better come out. They musn't think I'm alone. It might cost me my head later."

Lawton nodded and went with him. Outside the long-house in the open space for councils, the old men were squatted, and with them two visitors, two brown hill Dyaks, tattooed and grinning. Each carried a long *sumpitan* or blow-gun with a tiny sheaf of needle shafts, whose poison would kill at a touch, bow and arrows and long painted shield, and two knives.

The two white men joined the party. There was much eating and little talk, until at length one of the old men began to

jabber, and the visitors made response. The two were ill at ease, like any country folk come to a city, for this Golong village was a city indeed, being not merely one long-house, but many houses of all kinds. Talk went on, and while Lawton could make nothing of it, Thorsen could. A sudden low word broke from the big man.

"My sainted aunt!" he said, his eyes gleaming. "It can't be true!"

He jumped up and went into their abode, and came back with some gifts, beads and mirrors and a pair of knives. The two Dyaks received these and talked more freely, and excitement grew upon Thorsen, talking with them. Lawton waited and smoked patiently until, at length, Thorsen turned to him.

"They want one of us to go with them. They say a white man was up in their country for two years. Got sick and died. He had collected stones, all kinds, get that? He left the lot behind him. They think they're devil-stones and will trade them gladly. Chances are it was some Dutchman from the other side who was on his own; escaped criminal, perhaps. Anyhow, if it's true, we have a fortune ready to hand."

"How far from here?"

"Three days, they say, off in the hills. Our friends here don't know much about 'em. It may be all a stall to get a white head, of course. They'd like to have this yellow hair of mine to stick around a shield." Thorsen laughed. "If we both went, they'd take heads and trade goods too. If I go and you stay, they'll be scared to touch me for fear you'll come and burn 'em out. I'll make friends with 'em in three or four days and then everything will be fine. They'll not dream of touching us, then."

Lawton nodded. He understood how Thorsen would make friends. He would impress himself and his power strongly on the Dyaks until they would be mortally afraid of him. And it was of course the only thing to do. It were folly to be squeamish, out in these hills, where the authority of the Dutch sepoys, of the British flag, of Rajah Brooke's men, were equally lost and unknown. Here each long-house, domiciled from four to twenty or more families, and was a law unto itself. The smoke-dried heads of men were trophies, tokens of authority and prowess and craft, while wealth amounting even to god-head was in green jars, old green semiporcelain jars Chinese traders had fetched to the islands in the days of Kubla Khan. These Dyaks were savages. A white man was safe among them only if he reached their sense of fear first and foremost, and not always then.

"You're taking long chances going alone to investigate this thing," said Lawton slowly.

"Sure. Not half so long as if we both went, though. And you're taking chances enough remaining here. I'm not trusting these Golong chaps any too far."

"You want me to lay low, I suppose?"

"Yes. They'll bring in hard camphor soon enough. They've sent out gong messages about it already. You can trust that —— surly Malay of yours on the trading end of it. He knows his business, I will say, and he can steer you. It'll come from the low country, I suppose. These folks haven't much to do with the hill tribes, except to get heads. Thank heavens I'll have no more leeches! All dry upland country ahead."

"When do you leave?"

"I'll find out."

Thorsen gave his attention again to the palaver. Lawton, watching and listening, decided that he rather liked the general attitude of these hill Dyaks. They were savages, but they were curt and direct, knew their own minds, being simple folk with very simple ideas of right and wrong and even simpler notions of outside power. Their god lived in a green jar. They made no secret of how well Thorsen's crinkly blond hair would go on a shield because they thought every one else would have the same envy of it. Presently Thorsen looked around at his partner.

"Going now in five minutes. I'll jump up and go with them, see? Get my rifle and tell those two boys of mine to come with the packs. I have everything else I'll need. Send for you if the game looks worth while."

Lawton nodded. He rose negligently and strolled off into the long-house, then snapped orders at Thorsen's two favorite men. These hasily caught up packs and disappeared. After ten minutes the two hill Dyaks suddenly rose to their feet and asked if Thorsen wanted to go with them, now, this moment. It was cleverly done. They thought to catch him unawares, and they looked blank when the blond giant heaved to his feet and took the rifle Lawton handed him, and set off on their trail. They were

already going, and going fast. The two Bugi boys fell in at Thorsen's heels, then all five vanished along a runway leading into the trees.

The disappearance was sudden. Lawton, as was his habit, smoked on and said nothing, seeming quite unperturbed. He wondered how Thorsen's hair would look decorating a shield. It was long yellow-red hair with a decided wave, crinkly. After it was stripped off, the head would be none the less a trophy.

The old men slunk away, the talk was over. Lawton remained alone. Presently he saw a hulking figure approach. It was Kurvenal. The surly Malay came and sat down beside Lawton. It was hard to tell whether he was insolent or subservient. He drew out a tiny Chinese sleeve-pipe, filled it with a pinch of tobacco and lighted it.

"I saw those two men, Tuan Lawton," he said abruptly. "They come from a place called Api Gujong. It is a section of the hills yonder, very rough and savage, avoided by all other natives. Allah upon them, those infidels are ——! Their long-houses are scattered all about, the trails are closely set with traps, and having no fear of such natives as live in this village, their men are often away on the other side of the hills, hunting the Bugi folk."

Lawton's eyes opened in astonishment at this long speech.

"And how do you know so much about these infidels, Kurvenal?" he demanded.

The dark, sullen eyes flashed to his.

"Because once I was a slave among them, tuan. I got away, and I swore to return some day and pay my debts. Now, tuan, an army could not overcome those Dyaks of Api Gujong. Many rifles could not get into their country or reach their houses. One tap of the brazen gong and they would rush to defend the runways, and none could force entrance, so cleverly are those ways defended."

"Yes?" said Lawton, wondering a little at the inward excitement of the brown man.

"But you and I alone, tuan, could bring death and destruction upon those infidels, and gain a rich loot from it, by Allah! I did not want them to see me. I kept hidden. I know all their runways in this direction and how the traps are set, and I have the little jar of poison antidote. I can take you to their first long-house by night, so that you can come upon it unawares and slay them all and take their gold-dust and young girls. What an army can not do, you and I can do. In the name of the prophet, on whom be peace, we can show these hill rats how men fight!"

"You have vengeance to seek," said Lawton.

"May fire be upon me, but not shame! I shall take a heavy price."

"I have none. To each man his own custom, Kurvenal. It is not my custom to destroy folk without cause. Furthermore, you eat my salt and take my pay, so that you can not do this thing until I set you free. That will not be soon, because Tuan Thorsen has gone with those men of Api Gujong, and if we make war upon them they will slay him."

Kurvenal filled his little pipe and emptied it with four puffs.

"As Allah liveth, tuan, I think you are a fool," he said gruffly.

Few white men would have stood either the words or the tone in which they were uttered. Lawton smiled.

"By all the ninety-and-nine beautiful names of ——, I agree with you," he responded lazily. "Still, why think you it is so?"

"Tuan Thorsen will put a bullet into you if it is worth while, or will bring about your death in other ways," said Kurvenal bluntly. "It has happened before this, when he and his partners have found something very rich."

"That will do," said Lawton, an edge to his voice. "You will not talk about Tuan Thorsen in that manner again. You may go."

The shaggy Malay rose and departed.

Lawton smoked at his ease, his brain busy with the warning he had just received. It was not a new thing to him. One or two men had given him hints, he now realized, before he started out with Thorsen. Twice had the latter's partners died, on previous occasions, and men remember these things. So Lawton had really gone into the game with his eyes open, knowing how some people felt sorry for him, and it made him smile a little.

More surprizing was the new light thrown upon Kurvenal by the slavery story, and Lawton thought the Malay had possibly worked very hard to be taken on this expedition. Certainly the man craved vengeance upon the hill Dyaks, and was not to be blamed. The manner of his vengeance, however, would be a bloody one, and Lawton frowned at the thought. He must not

let the Malay make use of him in this manner. As for Thorsen, much would depend on what was found. If the hoard of stones proved to be a true story, then there might be trouble in the air. One could not be too careful.

III

HARD camphor came in, a good deal of it, from the lower country around, and a little gold-dust, some bird of paradise skins and a good deal of other stuff, none of it interesting to Lawton. Under Kurvenal's guidance he traded for everything offered, picking up a few small diamonds but none of any value. He had a commission from a scientist in Singapore for one or more of the sacred green jars at any price, but these he could not buy. At mention of them, Kurvenal smiled sardonically.

"I know where there are two, tuan," he said. "If you are not a fool, we might get them by tomorrow. They are sacred jars, married to each other, gods dwelling in them, and each is half the height of a man. To redeem them, the Api Gujong people would bring many diamonds, much gold-dust. They would lose anything on earth rather than those jars."

"As you have said," returned Lawton imperturbably, "I am a fool, and therefore we will leave them alone."

Kurvenal snarled an oath and said no more. But one day, as he sat smoking in silence, he looked up at Lawton and asked a strange thing:

"Tuan, when I came to you and you gave me a name, you said it had been the name of a warrior, faithful to his lord. It is not an Arab nor a Persian name. Where lived this man?"

"In a far land called Lyonnesse," said Lawton.

Curious, he outlined the tale of the knight of Lyonnesse, laying somewhat of emphasis upon the piteous and devoted Kurvenal, and changing the whole to accord with the mental vision of the man before him. When he had finished, the Malay nodded.

"You did well to give me that man's name, though, by Allah, I would have used my sword where he failed! His master was a fool. He should have taken the woman. If he had married her after the *semanda* fashion of our people, the king could have nothing to say about it. A man's honor is a different thing in different lands, however."

"You are fond of calling people fools," said Lawton.

The other nodded in surly fashion.

"Why not? It is true. As Allah liveth, four people out of five are fools. They know not how to do that which they do. The man who knows and does, may well term them fools. When I put my hand to a thing, I do it. Four other men vacillate and call upon Allah and look aside and wonder that the thing goes amiss. May the angel leave them in ——!"

Lawton's eyes gleamed in admiration. Here was the gospel of efficiency preached as eloquently as he himself had ever preached it! He rather hoped to see Kurvenal in action, not knowing that his hope would be fulfilled, with no great joy to himself, sooner than he thought.

On the sixth day after the departure of Thorsen, the brazen gongs spoke from the hills, after long silence. It was no message for the Golong people, though these translated it and gathered in groups looking out to the hills, and sent forth parties of warriors. Nor would any tell Lawton what it was about. Kurvenal finally unearthed the secret from one of the bearers, a man comprehending the distant brazen clangor lifting through the hills, and brought the word to Lawton.

"The Api Gujong men have sent off a party to seek heads, and this is a warning to all folk telling how the runways are guarded by traps and how no visitors are desired. Which way that party goes, is not said. Probably against the Bugi people on the other side of the hills toward Dutch territory. So at least runs the word, though it may be a lie."

Lawton thought little of it. That same afternoon, however, returned one of the two Bugis Thorsen had taken with him.

The man came late in the afternoon, an hour before sunset, and was escorted by two of the village hunters. He was exhausted from rapid travel, and could only hold out a bamboo section to Lawton, then tumbled over in a faint, from which other men revived him. Lawton opened the sealed bamboo joint by splitting it, and there fell out a hurriedly scrawled note.

Come quickly as possible with one or two men. No bearers needed. Chance for huge cleanup here but must have help. Most of local men leaving

today on raid. Bring shotgun and packet of rockets. THORSEN.

Lawton communicated the contents of this note to Kurvenal, then turned to the recovered messenger and questioned him. Tuan Thorsen had sent him in all haste. Yes, all was well; they were at a long-house on a hillside above a rice paddy, a rich place with many young girls in the upper room and many heads. The Dyaks had guided him part of the way and had given him a "safe conduct" by gongs. Yes, he could lead Tuan Lawton back there, and some Dyaks would meet them on the morrow.

"Let us go and winnow the wheat from the chaff," said Kurvenal to Lawton, and went to the veranda of their own house. Lawton balanced his camp chair and lighted a cigaret. The shaggy Malay squatted on the iron-hard bilian poles and fastened his eyes on Lawton's face.

"Now, tuan, there is truth in some of this tale," he said abruptly, "for when I was a slave in those hills I heard of a white man dwelling among the folk. I know this place to which Tuan Thorsen has gone. It is the second village or long-house one meets, going from here. What says Tuan Thorsen? Come, bringing one or two men. He knows you would bring me. So he plans to kill you and me both at one stroke."

Lawton was startled. "Nonsense! Such talk is folly."

"Wise men regard folly sometimes. That Bugi hunter is a liar. He had no "safe conduct," for that is not given, and he could not have come part of the way by himself, for there are traps and he would not dare face them. He came with some Api Gujong men, and these are waiting near at hand. This is a trap, and I tell you not to go."

"I do not accept orders—I give them," said Lawton coldly. "It may be the man has lied, but this is no trap. Tuan Thorsen has no reason to kill me as yet. Therefore, I go to join him, though I will be very watchful. We leave in the morning."

"So it was arranged," said Kurvenal with sardonic humor, "for the messenger to get here this evening. They know you will not start before morning. Tomorrow night you will reach the first village, and unless you are first slain, they will kill you there."

"Cease this talk of killing," said Lawton coldly. "You are led into madness by your hatred of these Api Gujong folk. Later it might be so, but not yet. Do you wish to go with me tomorrow?"

"I do not," growled the Malay.

Lawton stood up and left him, and ordered two of his men to be ready with the things Thorsen had desired brought. They would leave at full daylight with the Bugi, and this meant at five in the morning.

A clamor of voices brought Lawton out to the notched log at the front of his dwelling with the first light. One of the village chiefs was there, furiously angry, and others were coming while Lawton found his own men in consternation and disarray. To his angry questions one came forward to serve as interpreter and explain.

"The Malay has vanished, tuan!" he exclaimed. "He has taken your spare rifle. He has stolen a very fine old *sumpitan* and a bag of darts from this chief, and some food. He has also taken that little jar of his, and they say he was drunk last night."

"Tell the chief," said Lawton, "that I will make good his loss."

"He desires permission to pursue the Malay, tuan. He must have gone down the river."

"Let him go in peace," ordered Lawton a little bitterly. "Tell the chief that I will repay all that is missing, and more."

So the matter ended, except that Lawton remained very angry and hurt over it all. He had somehow believed Kurvenal to be not only faithful, but a little devoted to him. The value of the stolen articles would be balanced by wages due the man. This, and the abrupt leave-taking, did not matter so much as what it would lead to.

Lawton knew very well that the Malay had not gone down the river. He had started into the hills to work out the vengeance his heart craved, and with the first Dyak he slew, there would be a storm of wrath let loose upon Lawton and Thorsen. Moreover, Lawton was angry with himself because he had misjudged the man and had stuck to his guns against Thorsen's advice, for now he must endure taunts, and to endure these from Thorsen was no light matter.

There was no delay because of all this, however. Breakfast over, the three natives assumed their loads and started, the Bugi hunter in the lead, the other two following. Lawton brought up the rear with his rifle. As they left the village, a gong thudded behind them, its irregular brazen beat

booming up in long cadences, and then was silent again.

ODDLY enough, this little incident effected Lawton very powerfully. It was too much like a message to Thorsen. It was a message, of course, telling of his departure, and yet it gave him a helpless feeling. A man, any man, starting off into those hills of the Api Gujong was worse than helpless. Behind him boomed those gongs, and ahead of him and far into the dim high distances of the hills, telling all the world about him, where he was going, what his errand was. All the power of the white man and his weapons was set at naught by those bits of sounding brass, so that the dim, shrill mutter of them was like ironic laughter from the throats of savage gods. Lawton felt all this for the first time with an overwhelming sense of his own littleness. And then he was swallowed up in the forest with his three brown men, following a runway worn nearly knee deep, with the sharp, green walls of the forest to right and left, and the world forgotten.

This queer sense of oppression was perhaps akin to loneliness. Kurvenal was strongly noted in his absence. So much for personality, however gruff.

Hour succeeded hour, and gradually the trail wound into higher country, the forest became thinner. Other runways were crossed more than once, but nowhere had Lawton seen a living creature, save a few animals and the winged things overhead. He was uneasy over having met none of the Dyaks. Twice they came upon traps, and the Bugi hunter had missed the first only by inches. Rather, it had missed him, the hidden bowstring twanging viciously and the poisoned barb whistling as he frantically ducked. A wild pig saved them from the second, dashing along the runway ahead of them and springing the hidden snare so that a spear darted down from above and transfixed him, squealing. The Bugi cut his throat and brought him along for dinner.

So came noon. The four halted for an hour beside a bubbling little stream, and cooked the pig. Lawton heard no more gongs' alarm from the hills. The meal finished, he was smoking quietly to one side, when from the screen of verdant brush there stepped a Dyak warrior, fixedly gazing at the party.

Like most of his kind when in the open, the man was hesitant, trembling, ready to fly at the first movement. One of the natives came forward a little and addressed him. He was armed with shield and bow and quiver, a *sumpitan* over his shoulder, a bag of darts at his side and his rectangular shield was tufted with human hair. He looked from Lawton to the interpreter, and ventured a few words.

"He has come to guide us, tuan," said the interpreter.

"We are ready. Take up the loads."

The three obeyed. They set off after the Dyak, and he disclosed a runway they had not previously seen, a winding, closely overgrown trail between walls of green, and apparently little used. Lawton brought up the rear. With the coming of this guide, all had readjusted itself, and he lost his uneasiness at once. In the course of the ensuing hour, the guide three times checked them and led them past traps which otherwise had taken toll, two pits and one trigger-spear, cunningly hidden.

Now they came to a steep hillside, rather open of trees but thickly cloaked by giant ferns twenty and thirty feet in height, and among these the trail zigzagged as it worked to the crest of the hill. To one of these sharp turns the little Dyak warrior trotted sharply, wheeled and was hidden from sight. Behind him followed the Bugi and the two bearers. As Lawton came to the turn, he heard a sharp cry from the men. He halted, peered forward, saved himself at the very brink of a ragged and lightly covered pit. Into this the three men had fallen headlong, while the Dyak guide had vanished in the forest.

Lawton flung himself backward, stood swaying an instant to recover his balance. From the pit rose a sharp medley of voices, and then the Bugi tracker came into sight, climbing on the other two. He came head and shoulders out of the pit, scrambling. Then from the trees leaped a sharp *twang* and the man fell back with an arrow transfixed in his breast.

Lawton needed no telling to know that he was a lost man, yet he could see no enemy. He flung up his rifle, waited, eyes flitting among the giant ferns. From his right came a slight sound, and he whirled. As he did so, from the other direction there silently soared a net. It fell about him fairly and

was drawn taut. He went down, lost his rifle in the frantic but vain endeavor to clear himself and then struggled as the net closed about him. After a minute he relaxed, having got both hands to his belt, and lay motionless.

Half a dozen little Dyaks poured down around him. They looked in at the pit edge and laughed, then surrounded the captive white man, poking fingers at him, chattering among themselves. Two others joined them, eight in all.

Then, like a flash of light, Lawton moved. He had been resting, preparing desperately, making ready for his sole chance. The knife slid from its sheath and slit the net with one slash from waist to knees, leaving his arms free. Another slash and he was free to the shoulders. He seized his automatic.

They were already hurling themselves upon him with shrill cries, but so swiftly had he moved that he won the game. Barely. A club sent him staggering, yet he whirled and opened fire, the heavy reports of the pistol shattering the daylight, lifting sullenly to the hot sky. Two of the men fell—a third. The others leaped into the brush and vanished. Lawton freed himself from the net, picked up his rifle, went to the edge of the pit and called his two men.

A spear whistled, passing between his arm and his body. He fired twice in response. So they meant to kill him, now that they could not capture him! A stab of pain through his arm, and as the rifle fell he staggered from the shock. An arrow hung there, barbed head gripped to the bone. He seized if fiercely and tore it loose, despite the sickening pain. Then a slight prick in the hand. Another. He looked down and saw two of the tiny blowgun darts in him, and knew he was poisoned and would die quickly.

He reached for his automatic again, took a backward step, plunged into the pit.

IV

NO SOONER had Lawton vanished than a Dyak came leaping forth, arrow set on string, and darted to the edge of the pit. The pistol cracked from below, and the Dyak, flinging up his arms, fell a victim among his victims.

The others learned caution. They came out, all four of them, grinning and laughing. Well they knew Lawton would die before long, when they could have his head for the taking, and those of the others as well. One of them produced from a wrapped bundle a small gong of brass, evidently a Chinese trade gong of heavy metal, hanging from a long cord. A man held this up high while the owner struck it with a short wooden baton. The sound lifted, sharp and reverberant, and it was not hard to guess they were signaling the village how all had gone well with their mission.

The man holding the gong lowered it as the message was done. Suddenly it escaped from his hand, and his fingers flew to his throat. The striker stared at him, then whirled about and about like a stricken cat, clawing at one armpit. The other two Dyaks leaped to their feet, but two shots rang out from the thicket of ferns and they fell forward and lay quiet beside the one who had held the bell, and who lay gasping out his life. The bell-striker now stood motionless, feeling the place under his armpit where the poisoned dart had gone in. He was doomed, and he did not even stir as the shots rang out, but stood waiting, hopeless.

From the suddenly waving ferns stepped forth the figure of Kurvenal, rifle in hand.

Here were six dead Dyaks, one rattling and fast dying, and one on his feet. To the last came the shaggy Malay, grinning, and pulled out his knife. The Dyak made no effort to fight, did not try to draw either his long fighting knife or his little sharp beheading knife. He stood and looked in Kurvenal's face, and recognition suddenly leaped in his eyes.

"Yes, dog, it is I," said Kurvenal, and plunged the steel into him. The Dyak pitched forward across his dying comrade. Coolly, Kurvenal wiped his knife, replaced it, picked up the slit cords of the net, and then leaped forward to the pit-edge.

"Tuan Lawton! Are you able to move? Then catch quickly, quickly!"

He flung the cords over, made fast the end of the draw-string to a tree, and leaned at the edge, peering down. Presently he leaned farther and reached, lay down and reached, caught hold of Lawton's hand and tugged. He came to his feet and Lawton rose over the edge and stood there staggering in the hot sunlight among the giant ferns. Lawton was deathly white, his head was swimming horribly, everything was going round and round and he could only just realize

that Kurvenal had shown up to save him. A frightful laugh broke from him, and he held out his swollen hand and arm, now turning black.

"Poison, no use!"

He found himself speaking to the empty air. The Malay had disappeared. Lawton turned, reeled, lost his balance and went down with a crash, and his senses fled.

Out into the sunlight crawled the two coast men, packs and all, and as they came erect Kurvenal appeared and looked at them with his surly gaze. He was carrying his little jar.

"Go and find water, and see that you come back soon," he said. "You will die unless I save you. Leave those loads here."

They left the packs and hurried away. Kurvenal went to Lawton, pulled the latter into the shade of a fern leaf, and opened up his jar. He spread the brownish contents thickly on hand and arm, and bound it up, then he examined the ragged arrow wound in Lawton's other arm. This had not been poisoned, but none the less, Kurvenal tied it up with some of the brown salve, then took out his little pipe and smoked.

Presently the two men came back, bringing water. Kurvenal wet the bandages about Lawton's head, poured water between his lips, and settled back to regard the two brown men with his scowling look. He gestured toward the pit.

"What message did that Bugi bring you from Tuan Thorsen?"

"None," responded one.

Kurvenal took the fine *sumpitan* he had stolen from the village. He set one of the tiny darts in the blow-pipe, and lifted it toward the suddenly terrified men.

"Speak or die," he said without emotion.

"Nay, we speak!" both cried out together, and one continued, "He bore word that we were to fear nothing, that we were not to be injured whatever might befall Tuan Lawton."

"I thought so," said Kurvenal grimly. "And ye said nothing but came in silence, pigs! Harken, in the name of Allah. Without me ye are lost. To return to the village safely is not possible, for you are coast men and do not know the ways of the hills, and cannot avoid the traps. Go forward you cannot, since these Api Gujong men have already slain Tuan Thorsen."

That drove terror into them, and their eyes strained at the figure of Lawton.

"He is not dead," said the Malay. "Tonight he will burn and cry out in agony, and we must bind him hand and foot. Tomorrow he will sleep. Tomorrow night he will waken and demand food and be himself except for weakness. Now, if ye do not wish to obey me, go. If ye stay, there will be no changing of minds, else ye die quickly."

"Nay, we stay, Inchi 'La-uddin," they said in unison.

"Good. I have a rifle. Ye bore a gun, and there is the rifle of Tuan Lawton. Gather the two and guard them. Take that net and of it make a sling in which to carry Tuan Lawton. Take the *sumpitans* and all the darts of these dead men, for we shall make a great killing with them ere the night is past. Take your packs also. Then follow me. I will destroy any traps."

Those two men were no cowardly weaklings or they would never have come this far from the coast. They were of some sea-Dyak tribe, by nature pirates and killers, and the Malay wakened the terrified souls in them. Knowing themselves good as dead anyway, they decided to put their trust in Kurvenal, his manner impressing them with its perfect confidence. So they made ready as he ordered, prepared a hammock-like sling from the net and from vines, and in this placed the senseless Lawton. When they picked him up they had a staggering burden, but they made no complaint and set out after the shaggy Malay.

Kurvenal knew what he was doing and was fairly certain of his ground. The brass gong had sent to the nearest long-house a message of success, and this had no doubt been relayed on to Thorsen, another two days away at the main settlement. The first group dwelling was not far distant, and probably most of its warriors would be away. It would be quite unsuspicious, and Kurvenal had no idea of letting any alarm be sent out by gong.

The afternoon was wearing along when the two bearers found him waiting for them in a tiny hillside clearing. They gratefully set down their burden and flung themselves to earth, but the Malay regarded them dourly.

"Ye do well to obey," he said.

"That is true," returned one. "You are a tuan of much ability, a *nakhoda*."

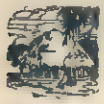
"We need a roof to shelter Tuan Lawton tonight."

"True, Nakhoda Inchi!"

"My name is Kurvenal," he said. "It takes the place of my *galar*, my name of manhood. If ye can not twist your tongues to it, no matter. Half an hour's travel from here we come to a long-house of the Api Gujong folk, whence came those men I slew. I go ahead, ye follow. My magic shall clear the dwelling, but it is advisable that ye wait here until the sun has fallen, then hasten on and gain the place ere full darkness comes. Is it understood?"

"It is understood, Nakhoda," they said.

Kurvenal investigated their packs and took several of the rockets Thorsen had ordered, no doubt for the purpose of obtaining impressive effects. With these and Lawton's *briquet* or cigaret lighter, he gathered up his weapons and strode away along the trail, and so was gone among the trees.



HIS progress was uneventful. He came upon more than one trap and sprang them, and went on smiling grimly, for there was little about the ways of these hill folk he had not learned. Presently he came into sight of the long-house and crouched, watching. It was a large structure on a sloping hillside. Kurvenal was a hundred yards from it on the upper side, the ground between being cleared, and on either side to a like distance. Behind it, however, was a much larger clearing, where the ground was level for a space before dropping again, and here was a rice paddy, the rice now all waving green and silver-blue in the setting sun's glare.

From the huge curved and thatched room of the long-house was going up a steam of light smoke, so Kurvenal knew the women were crouched over the fires, cooking the evening meal. Out before the place were numbers of old men, and a few warriors, not many. Girls were fetching water from a stream close by, in calabashes and gourds and woven containers.

Kurvenal made ready his rockets, very carefully, knowing enough about such things to aim them as he wished. The old men, awaiting the arrival of the raiders with Lawton's head, were watching the forest impatiently. On the veranda of the house, above the notched log, Kurvenal could see a large brass gong suspended. Being down-wind, he settled himself to smoke and wait.

Presently the sun was under the western trees, and already the swift shadows were stealing along the forest. Now Kurvenal waited no longer. He scratched the *briquet* until the string of tinder was in a glow, went to his first rocket and touched it off. With a hiss and a roar, the streaming serpent of fire smashed directly amid the group of old men. Before their wild yell had ceased, there was another hiss, and the second rocket shot forth.

It drove straight into the opening of the long-house, something Kurvenal had not figured on, for he did not want to burn the structure. However, the rocket dropped through the poles of the floor, and burst on the ground underneath the building in a stream of blue and red balls. There was a squealing and scattering of pigs, a shrieking of women, a shrill panic-scream of children and old men. From the front and back streamed the occupants of the place, crying that the devils were come out of the forest upon them, the various rooms vomited up their occupants, everything was abandoned in frenzy of terror.

Kurvenal smiled grimly to himself and moved to his last rocket. As he had figured, the panicky stream of fugitives was pouring for the closer shelter to the left. Here some of the old men and warriors checked them, tried to get some order into them, and then hissed and roared the last devil, heading directly for them in a stream of sparks, striking down one or two of them, shattering among the trees in a wild burst of colored fire. That was too much. Warriors and old men alike fled and the entire population of the long-house streamed away into the far recesses of the forest.

The Malay, knowing that none had paused to watch, strode out across the open space to the big structure. He went through it carefully, pushing aside the mats before each family compartment. Food was cooking, work half done, everything abandoned midway. He came upon no living creature, yet found what he sought, two green jars wrapped in mats in a room to themselves.

He brought them into the first chamber, and stood them in the corner, each jar half the height of a man, then he settled down to make a full meal from the prepared food. Darkness came and found him on the veranda, where he took the big brazen gong from its standard and thrust it into the thatch overhead. After a little came the two men with their burdens, and the voice

of Kurvenal bade them advance without fear. Finding him here and the Dyaks vanished, gave them new awe of him.

He had them bring Lawton into the compartment where the two green jars stood, then sent the weary men to collect food and rest. He himself dared not sleep. He knew what would happen later on after the moon rose. He sat by Lawton and tended him, and presently bound him hand and foot, gently yet firmly, for fever and delirium were getting in their work.

From Lawton's supplies Kurvenal procured a tremendous dose of quinine and forced it down the white man's throat, renewed the dressing from the little jar and waited. The quinine forced a sweat, and temporarily produced results. The Malay left the chamber, and found the two men asleep. He opened up their burdens, got out *sumpitans* and darts, and two rockets, and with these and the other blow-pipes found in the place, arranged his defenses. Then he settled down to smoke and watch the dark edges of the forest, upon his lips a grim smile of anticipation.

"By Allah, there will be a blood payment taken this night!" he muttered, licking his lips. "Then they will go away for a while and I shall go, too, and settle a little more of the debt. It is evident the warriors are all gone, so the second long-house will also be undefended, except that Tuan Thorsen will be there unless he is dead. Well, I can sleep tomorrow and work tomorrow night, and come back here afterward."

It was hard to keep awake, for he had put in a long day already, yet he managed it. The moon lifted slowly over the encircling trees, and Kurvenal made out flitting shadows at the edge of the clearing. He went and shook the two men awake and instructed them what to do and where to find the weapons awaiting them. They stole away, the ironwood poles of the flooring creaking a little. Kurvenal, leaving them the rear, was posted in shelter on the veranda with two blow-pipes and many little darts ready to hand, carefully placed that he might not set finger on the poisoned end in the darkness. Inside, he could hear Lawton beginning to toss and moan with the wearing off of the quinine.

From the first conception of his plan, Kurvenal had counted on this moment. He was a Malay, his faith was the creed of Islam, he lived simply and without pretense. He meant to kill, and that was all there was to it. As he watched the creeping figures come stealing in upon the long-house to see if the devils had departed, he grinned delightedly. They must not come too close, lest they stab up through the *bilian* poles of the flooring, but he waited until they were crowding in before giving the signal.

Then it was Lawton who gave it, in a sudden wild, piercing cry of delirium. The Dyaks froze in terror—only for an instant. One after another cried out as the blow-pipe darts flickered and bit, fast as Kurvenal and his two men could send the needle shafts. Horror and fright took hold upon the crowd as those tiny missiles of death streamed in upon them, doom in every scratch. They flooded back, broke, went shrieking for cover of the forest again. And through the darkness, now tenfold more terrible in their full brilliancy, hissed and roared two devils of flame.

On the heels of this, leaving behind him explicit instructions for the care of Lawton, Kurvenal seized the food and weapons he had prepared and he, too, vanished into the dark forest.

V

ALL that night and late into the following day Kurvenal traveled like a madman, going fast and far among the Api Gujong hills. Knowing all this district from long and bitter experience, he made use of certain secret runways which were not guarded by traps, and ran without fear. Then, being close to his destination, he curled up and went to sleep, and remained in slumber until moonrise.

Wakening, he took up his journey, finished it in an hour's time, and came to the second long-house, where he had once been a slave, where Thorsen presumably now was. Having no time to waste, Kurvenal lifted his rifle and plumped two bullets into the structure at the proper angle to rake the upper room where the young girls were shut at night. Then he waited.

Screams, shrieks, an affrighted outburst of voices, and then an outburst of terrorized figures, speeding in all directions for the shelter of the forest, not knowing whence had come those two shots. Five women in a clump came running directly for the Malay. When they were ten feet from him, he

stepped into the moonlight and leveled his rifle.

"Stop!" he said in their own tongue. "You remember me. Do not shout or I will kill you. Now come on into the shadows here, quietly. Remember, if you cry out, you die!"

They were quick to recognize him again, and came forward in trembling fear and horror. Kurvenal had been looking for Tuan Thorsen, but saw no signs of him.

"Where is the white man with yellow hair?" he asked of the women.

"We do not know. He went away yesterday. Four of our men went with him."

The Malay grunted angrily. He took off his tattered *sarong*, removed the few garments the women wore, and with these twisted strips of cloth bound four of them firmly, neck to neck, so that the four were all in a chain. The fifth he set out in full sight and ordered her to wait there. She obeyed, trembling, thinking he meant to kill her.

By this time some of the Dyaks were returning from their flight—warriors, these—to see if the long-house was safe again. Kurvenal lifted his rifle and fired at them. He continued firing, killing them relentlessly in the moonlight, then sending his bullets along the edge of the forest where the fugitives lurked, until his magazine was empty. He pointed the rifle at the unbound woman.

"Go yonder. Gather a great load of food and bring it. Bring also the green jar that is in the inner room behind the red mat. Set fire to the thatch as you come. If you fail to do all this, I shall kill you like those others. If you do it, you shall go free."

The shivering woman obeyed, ran across the clearing to the long-house and darted inside. After a little she came out again, staggering under an enormous burden, for the wrapped jar was half the height of a man in size. Voices leaped at her from along the edge of the forest, but she made no answer, making her way toward the Malay. A sudden yell pealed up as there mounted a red glow and a crackle from the long-house. Then bowstrings twanged. The arrows searched the woman in the moonlight, so that as she came to Kurvenal she reeled and pitched forward and died there.

The Malay divided her burden among his four captives. He had no time to lose now. Thorsen's absence worried him and he dared not remain here any longer, it being no part of his plan to let these Dyaks learn, just yet, his identity. The more mystery in this deadly blow, the better. He must go and let them rescue what they would, though he regretted not having taken care of their brass signal gong.

"March!" he ordered the four women, and as they went forward Kurvenal had a last glimpse of the great long-house in the moonlight. Flames were crackling at one corner of it, and a long billow of smoke was wavering up along the curved roof, a dense cloud mounting into the sky. A laugh curved his lips as he threw away his empty rifle and drew Lawton's pistol and plunged along the runway after the four captive women.

"Allah upon them, the infidels are paying!" he said exultantly. Still, he had a long way to go, and with the women could not go very fast.

At almost the same moment when the Malay was opening fire upon this long-house, back in the other house Lawton came to his senses. All that day he had slumbered in deep sleep, carefully tended by the two men. There had been no return of the Dyaks to their home, for now they were convinced that devils occupied the place, and they had scattered in the hills, what remained of them.

Lawton felt quite himself, but very weak. He lay for a little trying to think where he could be. A fire flickered slightly, and he saw woven mats, realized that he was in a long-house. He remembered now that Kurvenal had come at the last minute. He tried to call out, but his voice was very weak. As it sounded, the mat across the doorway waved, and the two brown men entered. They came to him and raised him up, and gave him hot broth from before the fire. Lawton drank and questioned them.

They told him where he was, everything that had happened. It was hard for him to understand. His mouth was thick with fever, every joint in his body ached intolerably, the effort to comprehend made his head swim. He drank more broth and then fell asleep.

With morning he wakened again, conscious of his weakness, quite clear-headed. He was unable to stand, but at his order the two men lifted him out to the veranda, where they gave him food and drink. They took the brown paste from his hand and

cleansed him, and he found himself in good shape except for his weakness. Two pin pricks showed on his hand. No more. Out here in the hot morning it was very pleasant.

A breath of air struck sometimes across the clearing, and the sun was revivifying. Through any crack of the thatch overhead the sunlight poured down in a tiny insufferable ray, white-hot as iron, until the *bilian* poles steamed to the touch in tiny streamers of mist. The sunlight was like molten liquid, working through all tiniest crevices, burning hot, intolerable.

That morning Lawton heard very distant gongs. The two brown men heard them also, but could not interpret the message. Those thin, clangorous beats came from the long-house attacked and burned by Kurvenal the previous night, for the Dyaks there had rescued their brazen voice. Half of the morning they sounded, now dying away, now swelling a little on the breeze, sending a terrible and fateful message across the hills.

Those Dyaks did not know who had smote them, but they could guess, and called upon their gods, also upon their brethren. Of all this Lawton knew nothing, however, since neither he nor his two men could interpret the brazen voices.

It made Lawton uneasy that his pistol was gone with Kurvenal. Strength was slowly coming back to him. In another day or two he would be largely himself, he thought. Later in the day he walked about the long-house and examined those two green jars with interest. In case of need he might even have used his automatic, though as yet a rifle was beyond him. There was no need, however, for Lawton had no suspicions.

He saw the huge figure of Thorsen appear suddenly at the edge of the forest and come toward him, and his one feeling was of huge relief. He did not know what Kurvenal had evoked from the two brown men who were now sound asleep somewhere inside the house. With the fever still tormenting all his members, with his brain still gripping at feathers, he was incapable of remembering clearly. He only saw Thorsen, felt a surge of joy pass through him, realized that this was his partner, a white man. Everything else escaped him. Then he saw the four Dyak warriors behind the giant blond, and could have laughed to note the obvious fear in which they stood of Thorsen. Three were lithe young men, the fourth was a thin, stalwart old man gaudily adorned with beads and feathers, the two knives at his belt in large carved wood sheaths, and the shield on his arm tufted with dark human hair.

These four did not want to approach the long-house, and halted. Thorsen turned and urged them on and from the gestures Lawton conjectured they wished to wait for him at the edge of the clearing. They had clearly picked up some apprehension of the place, perhaps from its very silence, for the bodies of the dead had disappeared long since. Thorsen broke into violent speech, but at this instant Lawton dragged himself partly upright and lifted his voice.

"Hello, there! Glad to see you. Come along."

Thorsen whirled and stared at him blankly for an instant, cut his tirade short and then slowly came forward. The four Dyaks lost no time in retreating, and disappeared at the green verge of the forest. Thorsen walked in toward the veranda, came to the notched log, mounted it as nimbly as any Dyak, and stood staring.

"By grog, this is a surprize!" he exclaimed at last. "Why, the blighters told me you were dead. Said you'd been scuppered by a party of raiders from some other village! I was on the way to see about it."

"Eh?" Lawton frowned, trying to think collectedly. "No, one of the men was the guide. Well, no matter. You can ask those two men about it. They'll know. Sit down and enjoy life. I'm a bit groggy with fever. Was poisoned. Getting all right."

Lawton dropped to a seat. Thorsen glanced around swiftly. His sharp blue eyes stabbed in all directions, his attitude was one of poised and tensed alertness, of suspicion, yet he could not retain suspicion of this pallid and weakened man before him.

"Want a smoke?" he asked craftily.

Lawton shook his head and laughed.

"Fever still spoils the taste, thanks. Call those two men. There's food in plenty."

Thorsen sat down, cross-legged. He picked from the floor a carmine mangosteen, large as a grape-fruit, and tore it open, crushing the pulpy red fruit into his mouth thirstily. Then he wiped his lips. He had not shaved for two days. He drew out cigarets and lighted one, his sharp eyes boring into Lawton.

"Where's everybody?" he demanded.

"I don't know." Lawton frowned a little. "I found myself here last night—must have been here a day or so. The two men said Kurvenal had found the place deserted. They talked about magic and blow-guns but I was too flighty to understand very much. There hasn't been a Dyak around here. Oh, yes—I got your note! That's why I came."

It was an effort for Lawton to think; he still needed hours more of sleep.

"Where's Kurvenal now?" asked Thorsen, narrow-eyed.

"I don't know. Haven't seen him."

Thorsen puffed at his cigaret a moment, then rose and stepped into the long-house, whence his voice presently lifted as he wakened and addressed the two natives. He was gone for some time. Lawton relaxed drowsily, and was nodding when Thorsen came back to the veranda.

"You go in and get to sleep," said Thorsen. "You're in bad shape. We'll stop here until morning. I've had a hard time of it since yesterday. Something's gone wrong with those —— men who came with me. It was the gongs this morning. You heard 'em? Can't trust those Dyaks a minute."

There was an odd, predatory glare in Thorsen's eyes, a fixed intensity vaguely alarming to Lawton. He came to his feet, passed a hand across his forehead, remembered.

"Oh! What about the stones? Find 'em?"

Thorsen's lips curved in a smile, and he took from his pocket a bulky leathern sack.

"There we are. Plenty for both. Half a dozen fine sapphires. —— knows where they came from, certainly not from around here! The rest are diamonds, and look like first quality stones. I've got to trade rockets for 'em. I've made those Dyaks believe there are spirits shut up in the rockets, and setting one off will protect 'em for a couple of months from the forest devils. You've got a few left, fortunately. I'll have a palaver with my four Dyaks tonight and pay 'em up. Think that scowling Malay will be back?"

"He should be," said Lawton.

Thorsen took his arm and helped him inside, back to the pallet of mats. There Lawton dropped down and was asleep almost at once. Thorsen looked down at him, laughed a little and returned to the veranda. He called the two men and talked with them at length, then left them to watch and flung himself down to sleep until sunset.

VI

LAWTON woke to semi-darkness, roused by a thudding sound. It came again. He sat up, recognized the sound of a brazen gong. Thorsen had found the gong belonging to the place, and was striking it.

In the mud fireplace flickered a tiny fire, with food beside it. Lawton ate and drank, remembered everything. He was quite clear-headed now, though weak in body, too weak for any exertion or sudden effort. The sound of the gong had ceased, but he heard Thorsen's voice from somewhere outside. Rising, he pushed aside the mat at the entrance of his partitioned chamber, and went out to the veranda.

Dusk was gathering. On the veranda he saw the two brown men, staring up at him, lying there with rifles ready. A dozen feet away, out in the open, Thorsen sat beside a small fire, the gong at his side, speaking in the Dyak tongue. Lawton saw four shadowy figures gradually steal in from the edge of the clearing, and recognized the skinny old chief with the hair-tufted shield. These were Thorsen's four guides, and they were very hesitant and fearful for some reason. Perhaps those gongs speaking in the morning from their own village, telling of rifle fire and the destruction caused by some unknown white man, had been a bad thing for Thorsen. They saw Lawton standing on the veranda, and cried out amazedly. Thorsen looked around and grinned. Well he knew that Lawton did not understand the dialect.

There was much rapid speech. Finally the four Dyaks came to the fire and took the rockets from Thorsen, handling them in much awe until they realized there was no danger. Then Thorsen fired one previously prepared, and at the hiss and roar, at the wild flight of the starry wonder into the heavens and the burst of colored lights, the four Dyaks dropped everything and fled with cries of terror.

They returned, presently, foot by foot, under the persuasion of Thorsen, being as much in awe at the appearance of another white man as at the rocket. They had heard Lawton's voice when they arrived

with Thorsen, but they had seen nothing of him, for at sound of his voice they had retreated precipitately. Now they stared, wondering what it all meant. Thorsen told them, as soon as they hunkered down, facing him.

"The people of this long-house have fled because that white man whom you see caused them great fear and slew some of them and drove them into the forest. Now take the gong, whose voice they will all recognize, and send out to them the message I will give you."

The four looked at one another. They were still in terror over that streaming spirit of fire trailing up to heaven. Yet here beside them were other such spirits, bound and captive, subject to them. Certainly they had suffered no scathe, and they had many gifts there in the bundles. After all, they could well afford to obey this white man. The old chief looked at his shield, and then looked at Thorsen's untrimmed yellow-red hair, more red than ever in the firelight, with its decided crinkly wave. It was evident he was thinking how well that hair would look when set in his shield. Thorsen laughed harshly.

"Try it, and I will loose one of those spirits and let him take you up to the sky! Now come to the gong and send the message I give."

The thin old chief grinned at having his thoughts read, and moved forward. He sat beside the gong on its standard, and not liking the stick Thorsen had used, took a heavy striking stick from his waistband. He struck the gong again and again, repeating this threefold call several times. The shuddering vibrance lifted and eddied and floated away among the trees. This was doubtless a call to any of the folk within hearing.

"Tell them that they may return to their home tomorrow an hour after sunrise, without fear," said Thorsen.

He was puffing a cigaret comfortably, and darted an ironic glance at the figure of Lawton, who did not understand. The gong beat and beat, until the chief paused and Thorsen gave more of his message.

"Say they will find here the men who have caused them all the trouble, and they may take their heads, and afterward they will have peace. One of these is a white man, the other is a Malay. That is all the message."

The gong boomed and sang in an irregular cadence of beats. When it was silent, Thorsen gave the old chief a cigaret and rose.

"You will come for me here before sunrise, when the sky turns red. I and two men who bear my things will go with you to the village of the Golong people. Is it well?"

"It is well," said the old chief.

He and his men gathered up their things and melted into the night. Thorsen came up the notched log to the veranda and laughed at his two men there.

"Go prepare food and keep quiet," he said in the Dyak tongue. Then turned to Lawton. "You saw? Everything's all right. Feeling better?'

"Much, thanks."

Lawton noted that the two brown men, vanishing inside the long-house, had taken the firearms with them. He himself had been unable to find any weapon, except native ones. He could not use a *sumpitan*, and the spears were heavy.

"We'll have a bite to eat. Those Dyaks will make some sort of litter in the morning to carry you. We'll have to get off. Think your Malay will be back then?"

"If he's not, I'll wait for him," said Lawton.

"Don't be a fool! We can't wait. It's nip and tuck whether we get out without a scrap anyhow."

"I'll wait," said Lawton.

The other shrugged and fell silent. Presently one of the men returned with food and water, fresh roasted meat that put new life into Lawton.

Through it all, he was not deceived. He had not understood the Dyak tongue, and he could not foretell what Thorsen intended, but from the moment he was shown that bag of stones, he foresaw his own doom. Now he had no doubt the note had been a trap, and Thorsen had sent the other Dyaks to kill him. He could sense the lies in Thorsen, could feel the enveloping air of deception.

Dimly he wondered at it. Had Lawton been himself, he would have laughed at the other man, would have ensnared him in his lies and then smashed him pitilessly and without mercy. He had intended as much at the first sign of treachery. Now he was helpless, and Thorsen could crush him with one hand. Yet he did not. Instead, Thorsen was falsely bland, trying to lull him into security, preparing some devious

trap. Such unnecessary care was curious, and rather fascinated Lawton. At the same time, it gave him a thrill of hope. Kurvenal might return, and would not be deceived. If only the Malay had not taken his pistol!

The two brown men brought fruit, stinking durians and rich mangosteens looking like cricket balls. Thorsen ordered them to stand watch and watch all night, warning them against allowing Dyaks to creep in and stab up between the iron-wood poles of the flooring. Lawton knew this watch was kept against the return of Kurvenal as well, and smiled scornfully. If the Malay did come, he would not walk blindly into any snare!

"You'd better have some quinine," said Thorsen when the meal was done. "I've got about twenty grains here. Knock the fever out of you tonight, so you'll be first-chop in the morning. I'll get it for you."

Thorsen rose, went into the building, called to the men to bring water. A subtle thrill coursed up Lawton's spine, a queer admonitory shiver. Something wrong here, something wrong! Thorsen's voice told him as much. Or had the fever left him still light-headed, feather-brained and imagining things?

"Here we are, old man." Thorsen returned with a gourd of water and some white powder in a folded leaf. "Put it down, then tumble into bed, and tomorrow we'll be off. A good day's jaunt will take us back to the village."

"Right." Lawton took the gourd and leaf packet, then turned to the entrance. "Better take it the last thing. Good night, old chap. Pleasant dreams!"

Thorsen grunted something inarticulate. He lowered himself to a mat and lighted a cigaret, and stared off into the darkness for a long while. Then he stiffened slightly and tossed away the end of his cigaret, and sat tensed. A distant sound was stealing across the night.

By day there was something eerie about such a sound, here in the savage forest and hills far from civilization or life. The thin, reverberant clangor of those gongs spoke eloquently of primitive ages when men hung up a sounding stone and struck it with a club, as may be seen today in the refined jade treasures of China. By night that sound was different. It stilled the squawk of flying foxes and the shriek of night birds, it hushed the forest and hillside, and floated out with tenfold uncanniness, lifting and echoing in a tense clear brazen-throated mutter, carrying easily over the miles.

For a little Thorsen listened to it, frowning, wondering what the devil they were saying from that other long-house. Perhaps it was some word to his four Dyaks, perhaps not. He had no means of knowing. Perhaps it had something to do with the rocket he had sent up. With a helpless shrug, he rose at length and went into the long-house.

He came to the room Lawton occupied, near the two green jars in which Thorsen took no interest. The little fire was flickering out, but by it Thorsen could see the empty gourd of water, the empty leaf packet, Lawton stretched out on his mats, face down. To one side was a half-eaten calabash of rice. Thorsen looked at the prostrate man, uttered a softly sardonic laugh and turned away.

"No need to bother any more about you!" he observed. "Pleasant dreams. That's a good one, that is! Anybody who can't tell quinine from arsenic ought to have pleasant dreams."

Thorsen turned in and slept.

VII

IN THE grayness of dawn Kurvenal left his four women captives, no longer joined neck and neck, but each with her wrists securely tethered about the bole of a small tree, and himself stole forward to the edge of the clearing.

His instinct of caution was that of an animal, but he had definite grounds for it as well. He had heard gongs the previous day and had heard gongs during the night, and he had four captives to tell him what those gongs meant. It were as well not to inquire too closely into the persuasion used by Kurvenal, for after all he was a Malay and a believer in Allah, and these captives of his were but women and infidels, mattering neither in this world nor in the next.

Kurvenal wanted the information and he got it. He knew the people of this long-house would return to it within an hour or so. He knew other Dyaks were here, who had sent out the message, while some of the raiders had returned from across the hills and were scattering out to catch the white

men and every one else. He knew, in short, that his best hope of life and liberty lay in immediate flight without a moment's pause. Being otherwise engaged, however, he disregarded the danger.

He had thrown away his rifle and now had only the pistol, Lawton's pistol. He saw the old Dyak chief with the hair-tufted shield and three other Dyaks emerge and go to the long-house. Forth from this came Thorsen, followed by the two brown men. This showed Kurvenal clearly enough that Lawton must be dead, yet he had to make sure. He cursed fiercely because of his lost rifle. With the pistol, he dared not risk a shot at Thorsen at such a distance. He had left his blow-pipe behind with the other native weapons. He was helpless.

He watched the Dyaks, the two coast bearers and Thorsen all file off toward the far side of the clearing, toward the runway leading back to the Golong village. Thorsen fingered something bulge in his coat pocket as he went. The eyes of Kurvenal glittered joyfully when he saw that the long-house was not burned and the burdens of the men included only food and weapons. He had still a chance of safety. He stole swiftly back to where he had left his captives, untied their hands, hooked them up by the necks, made them take up their burdens of food and the green dragon-stamped jar, and sent them onward to the long-house in the clearing. He himself followed last. It was not yet sunrise.

Kurvenal drove his four captives to the veranda of the long-house and made them sit down, then bound them firmly hand and foot and gagged them. He sent a swift glance around the clearing, saw no one, knew that when they arrived the Dyaks would come slowly and cautiously, and so turned into the long-house. He dreaded what he would find there, but went directly to the place where the two green jars and Lawton had lain.

He drew aside the mat at the opening and looked. In the dim light he saw the two green jars stripped of their coverings but unhurt. A half-emptied calabash of rice lay by the dead fire. On the mats lay the figure of Lawton, face down.

"As Allah liveth, he is dead!" muttered Kurvenal. "Tuan! Tuan Lawton!"

Lawton moved suddenly, sat up, stared at him unblinkingly.

"You! I thought they had come——"

"They have gone." As Lawton rose, the Malay surveyed him with that sullen scowl, and nodded. "Good. You can travel. I have work to do and a talk to make. When I finish, we must go quickly. By the prophet, destiny hangs upon a hair this day! Here is your pistol again."

Lawton took the pistol and holster. Then he touched with his foot the calabash half filled with rice.

"Empty this out that animals may eat it, or birds, but let no man touch it."

The Malay stooped and gathered up the calabash, curiosity in his eyes. He took it outside and dumped it at the edge of the rice paddy. Then he returned to where the four women sat on the verandah, and severed their bonds.

"One take that gong," he said, pointing, "and go sit on the ground and call men to a talk with me. Say that I have in my hand the green jar you brought, also the two green jars that live here. One of you go inside and bring out those two jars and set all three of them here at the edge of the verandah so men may see them. One of you go find food for all. Let none think to escape lest you die by the devils that fly flaming in the air."

Terrified of him as well they might be, the four women obeyed humbly enough. Kurvenal had slept a little during the night and was fresh. He smoked his pipe until one of the women brought him food. Lawton appeared, feeling quite himself, and curious.

"You say Tuan Thorsen has gone?"

"He went before dawn, with your two men and four Dyak warriors." Kurvenal devoted himself to the food, and pointed. "Eat. You will have need of it."

Lawton sat down. He asked no questions though curiosity filled him. One of the women was beating the gong intermittently while the three green jars, empty and gleaming in the light, stood above the notched log. The sun was not yet over the trees, but level beams pierced these and touched everything with dancing gilded finger tips.

"Where did you throw the rice?"

"Behind, by the paddy," said Kurvenal. "You supposed I had left you?"

"No. Why should I?"

The Malay's eyes gleamed a little. He was gratified by Lawton's simple trust.

"I thought myself a fool for not leaving

you and going, when I heard what those gongs had said," he observed reflectively. "But now, as Allah liveth, I am not so sure. Dishonored life is not sweet and is ill-nourished. Loving honor and life, man fights. You must fight Tuan Thorsen when we reach the Golong village. We shall not be far behind him, or at least you will not."

"And you?" asked Lawton, brows going up in surprize. The Malay shook his head.

"Is not the fate of man known to God alone?"

More than this he refused to say and fell into sullen silence. Lawton rose presently and looked out toward the rice paddy, and saw a great hornbill lying dead there. He shook his head at sight of the bird and smiled a little.

"Arsenic or quinine. Well, no matter! I shall settle with Thorsen tonight, if all goes well. Except for this arsenic trick, I'd let him go. Now I shall kill him."

He came back to the veranda. He found Kurvenal and all four captive women now sitting out in the open, waiting, and from three points in the forest wall, men were slowly coming forward, converging upon the group. These were all warriors. Kurvenal looked up at the white man and spoke in Malay, swiftly.

"Stay there, tuan. Let them see your pistol. Threaten not them, but the jars."

Lawton understood now, and smiled softly.

The warriors came forward, a score and more, *sumpitans* ready with poison shafts in place, arrows on string, knives out. Some recognized the Malay, all saw Lawton standing over the jars. The weapons were gradually put away. Now Kurvenal began to speak, and Lawton could easily guess the drift of his speech from the reactions of the Dyaks, their frightened glances. These men would have laughed at threats directed at them, but it was their precious and brittle wealth standing in peril, their dragon-marked gods, their jars of antiquity immemorable.

Lighting his little pipe and speaking very calmly, Kurvenal told of having satisfied his vengeance, as they could well understand, and described the power of the devils who aided him, and the white man's devils, by whose aid he had captured the three green jars. They could understand this, too. He had intended to destroy the jars, and would still do it at the first hostile movement. Otherwise, they could have the captive women back and the jars also, at a price.

One of the chiefs made answer to this, and spoke anxiously for the safety of the jars. He would buy them gladly, but the women were of little importance. Kurvenal nodded to this and demanded a litter for the white man, fresh meat, an escort of six warriors, and other men to carry the jars and litter.

"One bullet will destroy all three," he said. "If we reach the Golong village in safety, you may take away the jars. If we meet with trouble on the way, I destroy the jars. The answer is in your hands."

The terms were accepted instantly. The warriors laid aside their weapons and sent calls into the forest. Women appeared and old men, children not a few, coming forward. Kurvenal had the jars lifted out into the open, and stood over them with Lawton's pistol. Lawton protested that he could travel afoot, but the Malay only smiled grimly.

"Nay, tuan, we must make speed to reach the village ere dark. And you must not reach there weary and exhausted, for when we get there you will fight Tuan Thorsen."

"True. I shall kill him," said Lawton.

"Did you notice the chief who was with him, tuan?" asked the Malay. "An old man, thin, with fine weapons? He of the shield tufted with human hair?"

"Yes."

"When I was a slave that chief owned me. I want to meet with him again. By the Koran, the book of blessings, I shall make him eat of his own flesh before I kill him! We go to a hot vengeance, tuan."

There was little time lost, for the Dyaks were cheerful, very eager to get rid of these strangers and very eager to earn back their precious ancient jars. A long message was sent out on the gong, and women made ready a plaited hammock, and the three green jars were very solicitiously wrapped in mats and green rattans against the journey. The hammock was thickened with more mats and was slung on a long pole, and all was ready.

Now Kurvenal came to Lawton.

"All is prepared, tuan. I will keep your pistol a little while, until we get to the village. Fear not. These men will not hurt you while I am behind those jars. But I

see you are not afraid. Have I done all things to your liking, tuan?"

"Yes," said Lawton, curious. "Why do you ask? It is not your habit to care overmuch."

"True," said the other. "But you have given me an ancient and honorable *galar*, a name of manhood greater and older than other names, and I desire to make it good in your eyes. Allah further you! Will you get in?"

Lawton got into the hammock. It drew tight and most uncomfortable, but at least saved his strength. He wondered at the singular spirit of this dark Malay, and smiled to himself at thought of what a name had accomplished, yet there was no amusement in his smile. He divined something piteous and groping in the man, something indeed akin to that other and more ancient Kurvenal, and he thought about it until he fell asleep to the swing of the hammock.

VIII

HALF an hour before sunset, an hour or less before darkness.

The village was a scant quarter-mile away, and Kurvenal halted his Dyaks. Two men from the village had met them and were now standing watching, fearful, marveling. Lawton got out of his hammock, and Kurvenal spoke to him curtly:

"Go to the village with those two men. I must wait here until you are safe. These infidel dogs would yet take our heads if they dared. Take the pistol, for I have a knife and a club."

Lawton took the pistol. The Malay stood over the three green jars, knife in one hand and club in the other.

"Can we not go together?"

"No. They would like a white head. If Thorsen is there, slay him. I shall come quickly."

Lawton glanced at the squatting Dyaks, and it seemed to him obvious that they would not risk their precious green jars at the last moment. He turned, motioned to the two men from the Golong village, and strode down the runway. There would be no surprizing Thorsen, he knew. Dramatics would be all very nice, but they seldom came to pass in real life, and by this time the whole story of Kurvenal and the green jars and their recovery would be bruited all over Dyak land. Gongs must have been busy that day. No, it would be a straight walk-in and resort to bullets between him and Thorsen.

The village opened out. Lawton strode grimly on among the scattered houses, looking to right and left for Thorsen, his two men, his four Dyaks. He saw nothing of them. The people greeted him without astonishment, emotionless, grave in their bearing. It was hard for him to realize that he had been away only days, not weeks. Presently he came to the long-house given over to him and Thorsen. He saw their men grouped about the entrance, heard their cried of greeting and delight.

"Where is Tuan Thorsen?" he demanded, since they understood Malay.

They looked blank.

"He has not returned, tuan! Is he not with you?"

Presently Kurvenal came running, eagerness in his scowling face, his white teeth flashing as he ran. He had got away from the Dyaks easily enough after all, since they wanted only to take their green jars and go. He broke into a storm of speech, and Lawton was forced to realize that the incredible was true. His own bearers, the village chiefs, all told the same tale, all showed the same surprize at Kurvenal's insistent queries. Thorsen and his party had not come and had not been heard from.

Hunting, accidents of the trail, parleys—there were a dozen things to explain Thorsen's delay, and yet none of them satisfied Lawton. Kurvenal, he could see, was worried. The Malay said nothing, but sat in sullen silence that night. The chiefs came and talked. Many folk wanted to trade. There was hard camphor waiting and some gold dust, and other things were coming. Lawton told them that he would trade for everything on the morrow, so the gongs sent out this message to the jungle Dyaks and the long-houses down the river, telling of the palaver and trade that would take place on the morrow.

It seemed a trifling incident, this message of trade clanging out, and yet upon it hung life and death—aye, and fortune!

The night passed uneventfully. With morning Lawton was more himself, bathed and shaved and dressed in fresh garments. Strength was rapidly coming back to him, and all his old alertness of brain. Still no

sign of Thorsen. The three men and the four Dyaks had dropped from sight.

All that morning Lawton hung upon suspense, waited tensely, thinking every moment to see the yellow hair of Thorsen blinking in the sunlight. Through Kurvenal he did a great deal of trading, many folk having come in, and toward noon he suspended all business until later in the day. At his request the village chiefs sent out men to watch for Thorsen's approach.

After the noon meal Lawton went to sleep. He was wakened two hours later by Kurvenal, and sat up hastily.

"Tuan Thorsen, he has come?"

The Malay shook his head, yet his dark eyes gleamed with singular fires.

"No, tuan. Two hill Dyaks have come in to trade."

"Tell them to wait until morning."

Kurvenal ignored the order. From beneath his sarong he took an object and let it fall on the mat beside Lawton.

"They brought this to trade, tuan."

Lawton picked up the leathern bag and suddenly recognized it. Here in his hand was the very bag Thorsen had displayed to him, the bag holding rough diamonds and sapphires! No need to open it. Lawton's fingers could feel the stones under the leather.

"A trick!" he exclaimed, and came to his feet, buckling on his belt and holster, then opening the holster so that he could get at the automatic easily. This is a bag Thorsen showed me. Here is a trick to see if I am in the village."

"Allah alone knows," said the Malay gravely. "Come and look at those two Dyaks."

Lawton followed him swiftly. Outside in the clearing, quite alone and for some reason avoided by the village folk, sat two hillmen, squatted over their weapons. They stared up at Lawton in stupefaction. They had not expected to see him here, of all men.

And on his part, Lawton stopped short, returning the stare. One of the pair was a lithe warrior, the other was a chief, a thin man, old yet stalwart, bearing very handsome weapons, at his side a rectangular shield tufted with human hair. The chief who had been with Thorsen.

Afterward, Lawton realized just how singular his action was. He had fully determined to kill Thorsen, a treacherous and murderous scoundrel, and to kill him without pity. Now it came to him like a shock that Thorsen was a white man after all, had been his comrade. There was something deep and terrible rising in him, compelling his hand almost without his own volition, so that he snatched suddenly at his pistol.

It was all swift, in the flash of an instant. Lawton fired, just as the old chief was rising, and fired to kill. The bullet swept the Dyak off his feet, hurled him backward and dropped him in a crumpled heap, dead. The second warrior had already seized his strung bow. He twanged the string, and again two shafts in the sunlight. Lawton felt himself shoved violently, knew one shaft barely missed him. He saw Kurvenal whirl around and fall wordless. Then he shot the second Dyak. So swift had it all been between two bullets!

The violent tumult and commotion in the village subsided. There was nothing to fear. In the sunlight stood Lawton, unhurt, beside the body of the Malay, and out in front of him lay the two dead Dyaks. All the village understood perfectly why those Api Gujong men had thus been slain. It was well done.

Lawton dropped his weapon and knelt, turned over the shaggy Malay. For one moment he found those dark eyes meeting his, and an unwonted smile touched the brown face.

"The name—of honor, tuan!" said Kurvenal, and died that instant.

Quietly, Lawton let the limp clay down to the dust again, and rose. He understood everything now—why Thorsen had not come, what had detained him, everything. He walked over to where the Dyak chief lay crumpled up across his own shield and, with his foot, kicked the thin, aged body aside. In this action showed Lawton's real self for a moment. It was a callous thing to do, perhaps, thus to kick away the dead shell of a man.

The shield on which the chief had fallen lay blood-spotted in the sunlight, tufted with human hair. All that hair was not dark, however. Some hair had been freshly added, the skin pressed in tightly among the rattan withes of the shield. And this newly added hair was a rich golden shade, a ruddy yellow, crinkled and a little curly.

Lawton turned away.

HATE

by

David M. Nowell

OLD MAN CAL RHODES staggered under a smashing blow in the mouth, shaking his grizzled head in a vain attempt to clear his sight so that he might yet pound the bloody face that loomed before him. But he was done for. That last crushing blow had broken him and he sank slowly to his hands and knees in the soft damp soil. Little Old Man Knight swayed on his feet, gazing vacantly down on his larger foe. It had been a bitter, bitter fight—the result of an old quarrel between these backwoods neighbors—and contrary to local custom they had fought it out clean. Old Man Tom had said quietly—

"No guns or knives, Cal."

And Cal had agreed. Mrs. Tom had watched Old Tom go down to the field with many misgivings, calling after him:

"He ain't to be trusted, Tom, that cracker ain't. And 'sides he's bigger'n you. Better take yore pistol. God made guns and knives to make all men the same size. But ef'n y'all can't fight like gentlemen but has to use yore fists, why don't come home 'less'n ye whip him." Old Tom had just shaken his head, and now as he looked down on his enemy he spoke again, quietly, through his battered, bleeding lips:

"I whipped ye fair, Cal, and ye know I did, but ye fowt well. Let's call it quits."

Old Man Cal raised his head with a great effort. For a moment his lips moved with no sound and his swollen eyes burned with a savage hate. Then:

"All right, Tom. Ye whipped me fair. Let the ha'r go with the hide."

They shook hands and little Old Tom picked up his coat and walked slowly off toward his cabin under the big live oaks. For a long time thereafter Cal Rhodes sat staring off to the west, across the bare field and the charred pine stumps.

The preacher leaned across the pulpit in his earnestness that bright Sunday morning

" 'The heart is deceitful and wicked above all things, who can know it?' That's my text friends and ye all know it's true. I don't know what's in yore heart and you don't know what's in mine. God knows and sees. May he find no malice in any of our hearts this mornin'. If ye'll turn to—" And Calvin Rhodes with unhearing ears gazed beneath shaggy brows at Old Tom in the pew across, devising a way—devising a way.

Two years passed. Old Man Cal paused in his plowing and again stared out across the little field. Again he saw himself beaten, whipped by a smaller man in a fair fight and he spoke aloud:

"I'll have revenge on ye, Tom Knight, —— ye, if'n it's the last thing I ever do. I hate the sight of ye. I hate yore name."

From far away toward the cypress swamp came the distant cry of a hound. Cal Rhodes stopped. The hound's baying was growing steadily nearer and the old man forgot his grudge.

"By Jingo! That's Zeb Allison's Rowdy and he's a-bringin' a deer out across the ridge as sure as I'm a foot high."

There was no time to go to his own house for a gun and he bethought himself of the Knight cabin.

"I'll get Tom's, the old ——. Might as well let him think I'm peaceable like 'til I get my chance."

He arrived at his neighbor's out of breath. Mrs. Tom met him at the door.

"Why howdy, Cal, come in," she beamed. "Shore glad ye've decided to let bygones be bygones. Tom's down to the mill house a-grindin' cane."

"Can't come in, thank ye ma'am," panted Old Man Cal. "Jes' wanted to borrow Tom's gun. There's a dog a-comin' with a deer and I thought maybe as how I could cut him off."

"Shore!" agreed Mrs. Tom, "Here it is a-settin' behind the door. Hope you git the deer and ef'n ye do, bring us a quarter as we're plumb out o' meat."

Old Man Cal noticed that the gun was loaded, as he ran. When he reached the hog-pasture gate Rowdy and the deer had passed and he sat down on a log to get his breath.

"Might ha' knowed I couldn't 'a killed nothin' with his gun anyway, the old skunk!" he exploded, his failure to get a shot fanning his hatred.

A sudden idea seized him. He rested a few minutes and then returned to the field where he unhitched his mules and started up the lane to his own cabin. Arrived there, he went to a cupboard and took down his old powder horn and pouch of shot. Craftily he peered from the window to be sure that no one watched.

An hour or two later the gun stood in it's place behind the door and Cal Rhodes shifted uneasily on his feet as he said:

"No ma'am, I didn't git thar in time. Thank y'all anyway."

Spring came. Old Man Tom plowed his corn and played in the evenings to little Tom on his banjo. And Calvin hearing little Tom's whoops of pleasure at the old darky song would shake his fist in the direction of the sound and go inside "whar I don't have to listen to the old skunk's voice."

A lank cracker boy on an ancient moth-eaten mule pulled up in front of Cal's cabin.

"Heard the news?" he shouted to Old Man Cal, who was coming up the lane from feeding his hogs. "Tom Knight dropped dead this evenin'—jes' all of a sudden. Heart failure I reckon."

"What!" screamed old Cal. "It can't be —it mustn't be. I don't believe it. I——"

The cracker boy addressed the group in front of the post office.

"I never see the like of the way the Old Man Rhodes carried on when I tol' him. Why, he must have actually got to love Mister Knight. He shore did take on."

They buried Old Tom Knight from the little backwoods church. Calvin Rhodes by request of the Knight family served as pall bearer. With his last look at Old Tom's weatherbeaten face, now so still and white, he cursed silently at the fate that had robbed him of his revenge and went home to brood alone. Death had cheated him. There was nothing he could do.

A YEAR passed. Little Tom shouldered the farming valiantly and the widow Knight as befitted her heroic breed took up the lighter chores. Old Cal tilled his little field. It could be seen that he had aged from his stooping shoulders and the way he would absently stop in his plowing to stare vacantly into thin air. Came another Fall. From far across the ridge floated the faint quivering cry of an old hound. Calvin Rhodes heard and shouted to little Tom in the next field.

"Get yore gun, son, and come a-runnin'. That old pieded dog o' Zeb's a-comin' with a deer." Little Tom came "a-runnin'," eyes bright with excitement.

"Hurry up, Mister Rhodes. He'll cross by the hog-pasture gate," he puffed, handing the old muzzle loader to Cal. Old Cal hurried as best he could and together they crouched in a pine thicket. It might have been the same buck that broke again into the clearing—Old Cal fired—

THE preacher drew a large handkerchief from his shabby coat.

"Friends," he said, "We're here today to pay respect to our beloved brother Calvin Wetherbee Rhodes. He was a good and kind man with malice toward none. His death is a great loss to our little community. His was a noble forgiving spirit. May we all learn from him the spirit of forgiveness."

And little Tom in his father's seat sniffled softly and whispered—

"Pore Mister Rhodes— I shore wonder what made that gun sound so uncommon loud and bust thataway."

BREED OF THE WILD GEESE

by Frank E. Evans

IN THE sixteenth century when, according to the solemn pronouncement of the Lord Chief Justice of England, the killing of an Irishman was not a legal crime, the flower of Ireland's manhood took flight to the Continent to escape bitter persecution. For a full three centuries that flight held, and historians gave it the colorful name of The Flight of the Irish Wild Geese. Its penniless adventurers either died on the field of battle under alien flags, or lived to garner fame as admirals, ambassadors, field marshals, scholars or physicians in every court of Europe.

It was not until the close of the seventeenth century, however, that the first of the proud clan of the Dillons spread his rebellious pinions and winged eastward to the sanctuary of hospitable France. Another Dillon it was who led his regiment of the Mad Irish Brigade at Fontenoy in 1745. A Celtic cross marks the high tide of that battle where his impetuous onslaught turned a French disaster into a glorious victory. When news of it came to King George it wrought from him the cry—

"Accursed be the laws that deprive us of such subjects!"

Clare Dillon, one and a half centuries after his kinsman had rendered that great service to France, rode along the crude highway that, after crossing four mountain ranges from Cape Haitien on the north, skirts the sea to Haiti's capital on the south. There were but three gold louis in his purse, but as he caught the glint of the blazing September sun on the roofs of Port-au-Prince, the gay chorus of a Parisian music-hall ballad was on his lips. On the white road a cloud of dust appeared that moved steadily towards him. Wild, high-pitched cries marked its advance. The market-women frantically urged their heavily burdened donkeys to the edge of the road, and no longer flung back to him their soft-voiced "Bon jour! Bon papa!" to his cheery greetings.

"Vive le president! Vive General Charlemagne!" the cries took form.

Abreast of the Arche de Triomphe on the outskirts of the capital, shabby and unkempt, where tropical suns and tropical rains had flaked off patches of paint and left it the bare and leprous mockery of an arch, Clare Dillon reined in his native pony.

On came the column of dust. Ragged, barefooted peasants capered before it with simian antics, and shrilled incessantly at the top of their lungs. The sun struck blinding shafts of silver against the drawn sabers of the mounted escort. In its midst the black ruler of Haiti slouched in an open victoria. Now and then his hands jerked upwards. A shower of sous and centimes danced in the sun, and the half-starved peasants flung themselves recklessly under the hoofs of the mounted escort and fought for them.

Clare Dillon watched the bizarre spectacle with eyes that danced with merriment. He had landed in the North six months before, and this was his first glimpse of the capital. In the primitive interior he had heard weird tales of the giant strength of President Charlemange, in a country where few were strong; of his implacable cruelty to

"Breed of the Wild Geese," copyright, 1925, by Frank E. Evans

his foes and princely generosity to his favorites; his secret worship of the sinister Voodoo cult; the amazing contradictions of the palace life over which he ruled with iron hand.

He singled him out, a giant black in cocked hat, tunic of vivid crimson, with triple row of decorations and orders, epaulettes and broad sash of gold lace. And at the same moment his keen sea-blue eyes were caught by a sinister contrast. A peasant whose shirt hung in ribbons on a gaunt, emaciated frame was stealthily edging his way through the turbulent crowd that hemmed in the victoria. A bare machete swung in short, menacing strokes at his side.

Clare Dillon struck his spurs into the flank of his native pony. Straight for that sinister figure he rode. One of the guards, galvanized into panicky action, leveled his pistol. A bullet tore through his sleeve and burned like the searing edge of a lance thrust. Straight on he held his startled pony, and the peasants broke before him in panic.

The gaunt peasant, profiting by this diversion, had swung his machete upwards. Clare Dillon's right hand froze about the uplifted wrist and twisted it with a grip of steel. The machete clattered on the road and the ragged black stood dazed at the side of the victoria. His right arm hung limp at his side, broken above the wrist. With the quickness of a panther for all his bulk, President Charlemagne was on his feet, and whipped his heavy saber out from its scabbard. The would-be assassin fell under its blow like a stricken ox, his head split in two as a man would cleave a coconut. Above the mad tumult he lifted his booming voice in passable French.

"Monsieur, it seems that I owe my life to your quick wit. These slovenly guards of mine sleep while they ride. Your name, monsieur?"

"Clare Dillon, at your service, Monsieur le President. I come from Mirabelais, where I was lately engaged in the logwood business."

A wry smile creased the otherwise mask-like face. The black eyes gleamed sardonically for a brief second, then went lifeless as though carved of black, obsidian flint.

"The business of logwood can hold little promise to you, Monsieur Dillon. I have need of white men of your strength and wit. You will be in the capital for a while?"

"I have come in search of employment, and with letters to Monsieur Gaston LeRoy from mutual friends in Paris."

"Ah!" A sudden glint of interest flickered in Charlemagne's eyes. "My compliments to Gaston LeRoy. Have him escort you to the palace in the morning, and I will receive you after the parade of my palace guard. Au revoir!"

The motley cavalcade rattled on. Out from the fringe of the awed crowd a peasant woman crept, and knelt in dumb despair over the dead body at the side of the road. A gold louis spun in the air and fell at her feet. Clare Dillon rode on, his left arm wet with the trickle of blood, and his remaining fortune the less by one-third. The music-hall chorus was back on his lips.

It had always been thus with the breed of the Irish Wild Geese.

WHEN the maddest of his pranks had cost Clare Dillon his commission in the French navy, it was more than sudden caprice that had turned his wings to Haiti. Of all the Dillon tradition he had treasured most the story of Colonel O'Donnell Dillon, the soldier ancestor who had been as brilliant in the field as he was gay and debonnair in the Court of the great Napoleon.

Colonel Dillon had sailed overseas with General Le Clerc, son-in-law of Napoleon, in that futile and tragic campaign whose objective was to save to France the richest gem of her colonial empire, the island of Haiti. Yellow fever had claimed him as its victim along with thousands of Napoleon's veterans.

Clare Dillon had sailed with brave dreams. He had pictured himself as the lord of a plantation whose acres would be white with cotton, and aromatic with the flavor of the coffee berries that had such vogue in France.

There he would live in feudal splendor, served by an army of black retainers until he had accumulated a fortune, and then—Paris! A fortnight in Haiti had erased the brave dreams. He had found that in all its ten thousand of square miles there was not a plantation that the Garden of the Tuileries could not have held; that its cotton and coffee grew semi-wild along its ruined roads and in its uncared-for fields. The logwood boom was at a sensational height when he landed at Cape Haitien, and he had

invested all his money in it. Out in the logwood areas of the North he had worked like a galley slave, lived the primitive life of the hills, and had seen the deflated boom wipe out his last hundred louis. Yet he had two gold louis, the haunting memory of a music-hall ballad, and the unconquerable gaiety of his race.

He found Gaston LeRoy's house on the slope of the rampart of hills that rose from the sea. From its wide verandas stretched an incomparable panorama of beauty in the great semi-circle of the bay, the green of the hills, the glory of the tropical skies.

The wound in his arm had proved to be but a scratch. A plunge into the outdoor swimming pool into which cold water from the hills flowed all day long, an admirable dinner, and a choice wine had worked their magic. He spoke impulsively—

"Tell me, my dear friend, what can I find to do here?"

Slim and elegant of figure, with snow-white mustache and imperial that lent dignity to hooded black eyes and aquiline nose, Monsieur LeRoy might well have been a court gallant of the Second Empire. It is to his credit that he was as fiercely proud of his Haitian blood as he was of his French. A patriot in a Black Republic that teemed with graft and intrigue, Gaston LeRoy was a unique product.

"You were but lately an officer of the French navy?"

"Yes, and I would be one now but for the foolish remark of a young British guardsman on leave in Paris," answered Clare Dillon.

He toyed with the long stem of his wine glass for a moment before he went on.

"I saw fit to dash a glass of just such excellent wine into the face of that young guardsman. He had spoken slightingly of a young Irish actress who was then the toast of Paris. True I had met her but once. For all I know she may have been the light of love that his careless remark painted. But she was a beautiful woman, and an Irish one at that. Of course there was a duel the next morning, and I wounded him in his sword arm before it had barely begun.

"All would have been well had not a stupid minister of marine published but the week before a drastic order forbidding the honorable practice of dueling. I had to resign or face a court martial, and the notoriety of that duel might have been distasteful to the young lady. So here I am, the penniless scion of a long line of soldiers and sailors, and as helpless in business as any babe."

He laughed softly and, with him, Gaston LeRoy. Such a youth was dear to the romantic LeRoy.

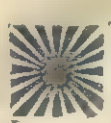
"You did what any French gentleman would have done," the older man hastened to assure him. "Today you did my president a signal service. Already you have shed your blood for Haiti, and I, in all my fifty years, have not done that. And now," he dropped his voice to a discreet pitch, "I shall speak quite as frankly, for I know you will honor my confidence."

"To my friends, Monsieur Dillon," he went calmly on, "I am a Haitian gentleman of French descent who makes a comfortable living as a shipper of coffee to Havre. To President Charlemagne and a trusted few I am the chief of his secret service. You can well understand that with his life in daily jeopardy of the knife or the secret poisons his enemies brew in the hills, it is vital that I should keep my true position a secret."

The blue eyes that always held a smile were now glowing. In a twinkling Clare Dillon had found himself on the threshold of the adventure that was salt to his life. Revolutions, plots and counter-plots, the mystery of the hills and jungles of this land that held so much mystery and tragedy, were jogging his elbow.

"I will be greatly surprized, my dear friend," said Gaston LeRoy, "if President Charlemagne does not find tomorrow good use for your courage and training. Even now, in the North from which you came, Nord Alexandre is plotting to put himself at the head of a new revolution. His agents are in our midst. The tenure of our rulers is precarious at the best, and Nord Alexandre is a black tiger.

"But one of our long line of emperors, kings and presidents has lived to serve out his term of office in our hundred years of history. You can do much to help me make Charlemagne the second exception. Monsieur, I offer you a toast. To the health of the president, and to La Belle France!"



THE sun was blazing pitilessly down on the dusty, shadeless Champ de Mars the next morning as the two men watched the review of the palace guard by its black ruler. Barefooted, clad in heavy woolen

uniforms of blue and red, the guard swung past them. Clare Dillon's practised eyes watched them with a wonder that he found hard to conceal. Some were armed with modern French carbines, others with German Mausers, still others with ancient flintlocks. One in the front rank proudly shouldered the stock of an old musket, while his covering file grasped its lock and barrel.

Brutish of face, a company of yokels in ill-fitting uniforms, they shambled along, while the gorgeously appareled band played the stirring strains of the Haitian national air, "La Dessalines."

The review at an end, they approached Charlemagne, who towered above all on the field save the young Frenchman.

"Ah, Monsieur Dillon. Tell me, in all your European experience have you ever seen soldiers to compare with mine?" boomed Charlemagne.

"Never have I seen their like, Monsieur le President," was the truthful answer.

Gaston LeRoy coughed discreetly.

"You hear, my friends."

Charlemagne turned with a dramatic sweep of his arm to the group of gaudily uniformed officers. It was clearly evident that the ready answer of this young Frenchman who had but the day before saved the life of their chief had made a happy impression.

All of the capital's society and its diplomatic set were present when the two entered the reception room of the palace in the wake of the presidential party. The men were in uniform for the greater part, the rest in evening dress. Necklaces of pearls and diamonds flashed on the bosoms of the women. Clare Dillon saw that many were as fair as the women of any European court. Regardless of their color they had in common the native graces of France, the frocks and tongue of France and all its gaiety of speech.

Of all the women there was one of a dark and piquant beauty whom he singled out of that amazing gathering. Gaston LeRoy caught the target on which his roving eye had rested.

"You must meet Madame Eckermann, my friend. She is an Austrian, the wife of the richest German in the island. He is a Prussian pig, and a most detestable one, but you will find her charming."

It was Clare Dillon's first meeting with a white woman in Haiti, and his spirits soared to her gay badinage. He was oblivious to all but the mischievous play of Madame Eckermann's black eyes, and the charm of her brunette beauty, when a stiff ramrod of a man joined them.

"My husband, Monsieur Dillon, the young gentleman who saved the president's life yesterday," she presented him.

Clare Dillon on the instant found him as distasteful as he had found her adorable. Cold gray eyes that had in them the cruel play of knives, stiff pompadour of a sandy hue, a squarely shaped head on burly shoulders. In short, to the young Frenchman he was the perfect type of Prussian that he instinctively disliked with all the vigor of his Gallic blood. Herr Eckermann bowed stiffly and murmured his compliments in a guttural French that bore a curious lisp.

As she moved away on her husband's arm Madame Eckermann said over her shoulder:

"I am at home to my friends always on Fridays at five, Monsieur Dillon."

This time the duel of blue eyes and black was of far different import.

As the reception drew to its end an *aide-de-camp* bore Clare Dillon off with much ceremony from the knot of Haitians who, voluble with repeated drafts of champagne, were exchanging lively rallies with him. Charlemagne came straight to the point when the *aide* bowed himself out of the private suite.

"Monsieur Dillon, Hector Charlemagne does not forget those who do him service, nor—" and the black flinty eyes struck with sudden fire—"does he spare his enemies. Only a week ago the admiral of my fleet, stripped of his insignia of rank, paid the penalty for treason before a firing squad. Monsieur, I offer you the command. You will have the rank and pay of the highest admiral in France's navy. Your answer, Monsieur!"

Had he stopped to analyze his impressions of what he had seen and heard of either branch of the Haitian service Clare Dillon might have declined the surprizing offer. But he was a sailor, and here was a navy that he could mold and shape to his heart's desire. He was a fighter by inheritance and instinct, and Haiti was a cockpit of perennial revolutions. He was penniless; and the post carried emoluments far beyond his most sanguine dreams. That day, too, a pair of black eyes had intrigued him immensely. But, above and beyond all, he

was of the breed of the Irish Wild Geese, and his hand shot up in smart salute.

"Monsieur le President, I am proud to accept the command with which you honor me."

"*Bien!* I have need of you, Admiral Dillon. Our friend, Gaston LeRoy, will make you acquainted with the state of the fleet. He will make all the arrangements in my name. *Au revoir!*"

As he passed down the palace steps into the blinding white heat, the picture of the only Haitian man-o'-war that he had seen flashed before his mind. She was a slatternly gunboat at anchor off Cape Haitien the day he made that port. A draggle-tail of a vessel she was, an affront to his sailor's eyes, a stench in his nostrils.

Low in the scales as the Haitian army was, honeycombed with graft and incompetency, he knew that navy ranked immeasurably below it. Yet his eyes were smiling, and the gay chorus of the music-hall ballad was on his lips, for all that was to be changed if youth and the traditions of the French navy counted for aught.

THOSE were hectic days that followed, for the Haitian navy, in truth, was a corpse to be galvanized into life. In all, a squadron of four gunboats, obsolete waifs of England and France, it had been bought by corrupt agents who had made a pretty penny with their juggled accounts. So far its only service had been in the transport of ragged troops to coastwise destinations, and in ineffective blockades at which the gunrunners thumbed their noses.

Its machinery was decrepit, its bottoms and hulls foul, its rigging disreputable, its batteries lacked breech-plugs or sights, and its ammunition was generally defective. Its sullen, half-starved crews were on the point of mutiny, easy targets for the overtures of the revolutionary agents.

Charlemagne's summary shooting or exile of its ranking officers had removed a dangerous factor, but when Admiral Dillon broke out his four-starred flag on the flagship, the *Crete-a-Pierrot*, his squadron was at its lowest ebb of morale and efficiency.

Guided by Gaston LeRoy he worked like a pirate captain of old to remedy the ruin that he found. From obscure warehouses he daily unearthed tons of supplies, ordnance and equipment that were resting there until they could have been sold to the first bidder. From six bells in the morning until eight bells in the afternoon he drove his officers and men to the limit of their endurance, and spared himself the least of all. It was a herculean task, and back of it lay the lash of the menace of the revolution that was fast shaping in the hills.

It went forward under untoward handicaps that often were sinister. A heavy block crashed down from the upper rigging on the very day he took command, and missed him by a foot. A sharp-edged marlinspike lodged in the deck at his feet two days later, and when he stepped ashore that night a pistol shot sang past his ears. The after gangway of the flagship carried away one morning as he set his foot on it, and plunged him into harbor waters where triangular fins cruised eternally in the quest of food.

It was a full fortnight before the secret agents that Gaston LeRoy had placed on each of the ships as petty officers could, by the judicious plying of the fiery native rum, ferret out the barefooted malcontents who were acting as the tools of Nord Alexandre.

One by one they paid the penalty before the firing squad at dawn on the mud flats of Dessalines Field.

Yet, for all the success of the agents, they could not trace the mischief back to the central head who was working in the dark for Nord Alexandre. His tools were too illiterate, too inarticulate, to be of service in that direction. The ragged volleys of the firing squad that now followed swift on the heels of every act of sabotage, however, cleansed the once ragged crews as effectively as paint and water had regenerated the ships.

Then came the day when the squadron steamed out of Port-au-Prince in well-ordered column for a shakedown cruise to Mole St. Nicholas to the north. At ten knots it steamed, without breakdown of machinery, and without mishap along those sea-leagues of the notoriously poorly lighted coast, until it dropped anchor in the bay where once the navies of Great Britain, France and Spain had in their turn ridden.

Boat drill, the landing of armed parties on the sandy beaches, the crack of Mauser rifles on the improvised ranges and endless inspections filled the fortnight there. Then, blundering sadly at first, the squadron steamed back to its base, maneuvering from

line into column, from cruising formation into battle approach, with the four-inch guns and the six-pounders blazing away in target practise at the battered hulks that lined the coast, until even its admiral beamed genially on the crews that now adored him as their *gros blanc chef*.

The sun was setting in gorgeous pageantry of color on the Isle of Gonave that lies athwart the entrance to Port-au-Prince Bay when the squadron steamed decorously in and came smartly to anchor. The saluting battery of the *Crete-a-Pierrot* barked out the national salute to the coal-black ruler of the Black Republic. As Admiral Dillon went over the side to the shrill piping of the boatswain's mate, he recalled that it was Friday, and that on Friday Madame Eckermann was at home to her friends at five.

He had found time before the squadron's departure, despite those days of feverish preparation, to enter into the social gaiety of the capital. With infinite tact, the born gift of camaraderie, and unquenchable spirits, he had already taken his place in it, as befitted his exalted rank and the prestige of his years in France.

Despite the fact that Charlemagne was a black, there were few of his color whose social aspirations could win an entrée into the gay parties that found the Cercle Bellevue, the Maison LeRoy or the home of Madame Eckermann their favorite rallying grounds.

Of that small circle of whites, the diplomatic set, and those of the Haitians who were of European descent, Herr Eckermann, so Clare Dillon had early found, was rarely present. Business trips along the coast and into the interior in the interests of the German banking firm that he represented meant prolonged absences. The roads were but trails, passable only by horse in the dry seasons, and the coastwise vessels were few and far between.

Already Clare Dillon entertained a shrewd suspicion as to the true nature of many of those trips, but he had shrugged his shoulders with true Gallic indifference, and his growing intimacy with the charming Austrian wife of the German banker soon became the talk of the capital.

His call the afternoon on which the squadron returned, however, proved to be his last for several days. There were long and secret conferences at the palace between himself, Charlemagne and LeRoy, and other unavoidable happenings that he could not control. A full fortnight of this held, and it was then that Madame Eckermann, piqued beyond endurance by his seeming neglect, took the field.

He was busily scanning the charts of the harbors on the western coast in the cabin of his flagship late one afternoon, preparatory to a plan of blockade in the event of Nord Alexandre's declaration of war, when Madame Eckermann appeared, unannounced, at his door.

It was a daringly unconventional thing for a woman in Haiti to do, and both knew how the tongues would wag ashore. There was no evidence of surprize, however, in the graciousness of his welcome. Boredom had seized him that afternoon, and thoughts of the pretty Austrian had more than once slowed up his work. He was in the mood for merry prattle over a glass of iced champagne, and the welcome of his sea-blue eyes speedily quieted her evident perturbation.

She had ceased her charming chiding of his neglect, and was in the midst of the piquant story of the last dance at the Cercle Bellevue, when the cabin darkened as though a blanket had dropped over the open air ports. A gust of cold wind shot through. A great drop of water splashed through one of the open ports. Thunder crashed like a salvo of big guns. Across the darkening sky stabbed the blinding flash of tropical lightning.

CLARE DILLON hastily placed his half-emptied glass of champagne on the table, apologized, and raced up on deck. Back of the rugged slopes of Fort Nationale a huge black cloud had formed. Beyond those slopes lay the broad acres of the Plain of the Cul-de-Sac. A storm barometer that never proved derelict was Fort Nationale when shrouded in cloud. He knew that across the dusty plain at its back a tropical storm was driving with the speed of a torpedo toward the capital.

Not until dawn did that tropical storm, with sheets of rain lashing against the flagship in relentless fury, with appalling thunder and terrifying flashes of lightning, give up its mastery.

In the cabin a frantic, distraught woman cowered and wailed, stricken by the drama that the storm held for her, panicky with

fear of that night of mad storm and the fury that Herr Eckermann would visit upon her.

On the quarterdeck of the *Crete-a-Pierrot* Admiral Clare Dillon paced at dawn with steady tread. His gig was rounding up to the starboard gangway and he turned to go below for Madame Eckermann, when he saw a disreputable shore boat coming alongside. In its stern sheets was Herr Eckermann, crouched as though to spring aboard the moment his craft touched the gangway. With a curt order to the officer of the deck not to allow any one on board until he gave the order, he went below.

"Oh, he will kill us both, Clare!" gasped Madame Eckermann.

"I think not," was the cool answer. "Certainly I was not born to die at the hands of such a Prussian pig. As for you, my dear, you are far too charming for such a fate. Come, my dear, you must meet him with your head up. A word from you if he dares to lay his hands on you for this most unfortunate accident, and I have knowledge enough of his mysterious trips from the capital to give Herr Eckermann the choice of three things: deportation to his motherland, a whitewashed cell in the Penitencier Nationale, or a firing squad on Dessalines Field!"

His keen eyes were on her as he delivered this theatrical ultimatum. Suspect though Herr Eckermann was, there was far too much lacking in the secret *dossier* of Gaston LeRoy to warrant any step that would bring a German cruiser bristling into Port-au-Prince harbor.

It was a chance shot delivered on the spur of the moment, but it went home. He saw it in the black eyes that went wide with mingled terror at the threat, and relief at the belief that she held in her hand a weapon that she might use if worse came to worst. Meanwhile her hands were busily flitting to her hair, smoothing out her crumpled frock. Then, with a great sigh, she said:

"I will remember. I am ready now, *cheriel*"

On deck once more, with the haunting chorus of the music-hall ballad on his lips, Clare Dillon strode to the starboard gangway.

"Welcome on board, Herr Eckermann. I am indeed honored."

To this insouciant greeting Herr Eckermann had but a spluttered storm of Teutonic invective to offer as he clumsily mounted the gangway.

"You will suffer the loss of your flag for this, Monsieur Dillon!" he raged as he reached the deck.

"Pardon me. Admiral Dillon, if you please," came the unruffled reply.

Herr Eckermann took a menacing step forward. His face was purple.

"By what right dare you entertain my wife overnight on this swine of a warship?" he bellowed.

"Stop where you are, or I'll have one of my blacks flog you off the ship. You have insulted my ship. I will attend to that later, you may be sure." The words came cold and minatory. "But you, nor any other, pig of a Prussian or man of a decent race, may not insult a woman on a ship that flies the flag of the Haitian navy!"

Herr Eckermann's mouth opened, but caution froze the words that his lips framed.

"Pierre! Sylvio!"

Two sailors stepped out of the knot of curious onlookers, their hands at salute.

"Escort this man back to his boat. Shove it off, and if he attempts to return you will sink it. *Vite!*"

Herr Eckermann, now silent as the grave, moved chastened away between the two blacks. The native at the crazy oars of the disreputable shore boat, menaced by the drawn cutlasses and the vivid Creole profanity of Pierre and Sylvio, shot away at frantic speed. Five minutes later the immaculate gig of the flagship, with Admiral Dillon and Madame Eckermann seated beneath its awning of striped red and blue, passed it halfway to the shore.

Of course the story spread like wildfire through the cafes where all of Port-au-Prince's leading citizens gathered at noon for their *aperitifs*. From there it found its way to the palm-shaded houses of the villa district, and in the palace the black despot of Haiti chuckled grimly at it. The journalists of the capital, always on the *qui vive* for a piquant story, found in it an inexhaustible source of discreetly veiled humor.

The arrogant, domineering Herr Eckermann had never been popular in the capital. This sunny Frenchman of irreproachable manner and debonair carriage, who had worked his wizardry on the decaying Haitian navy, had long ago captured its fancy. The social creed of the capital had ever been an amazing contradiction of stiff conventions and outrageously loose ones.

From the incident, magnified with every

telling, emerged three salient points. Herr Eckermann was the butt of an audacious Frenchman. Between the charming Austrian and him there existed an idyllic romance. And no man could with impunity insult even his own wife on the deck of a Haitian warship while Admiral Dillon was in command.

The more significant fruits of Madame Eckermann's unconventional visit to the *Crete-a-Pierrot* followed while the affair was still a nine-day sensation. Clare Dillon was entering the grilled gateway of Gaston LeRoy's house at night when one of the Eckermann servants covertly handed him an envelope that bore a faint, distinctive perfume. He hardly needed to glance at the slanted signature of the note to know that it was a message from madame herself. A moment later he and LeRoy were bent breathlessly over its startling news.

Herr Eckermann, goaded to a violent outburst by the publicity of his discomfiture, had struck her twice and had threatened her with further violence if she left the house before his return from a trip to Jamaica the next day at noon.

Humiliated beyond endurance and thirsting for revenge, the proud Austrian disclosed the secret of the Jamaican trip. It was the beginning, so she warned, of extensive plans to run guns and ammunition through the Haitian ports to the forces massing in the North under Nord Alexandre.

IT WAS their first definite knowledge that Eckermann was the guiding genius behind the threatened revolution. Gaston LeRoy struck his clenched fist against his knee. His black eyes were blazing, but his words came slow and measured.

"Without arms, Nord Alexandre is helpless for all his bombastic threats. If we can capture the ship with which Eckermann will try to run his guns through we will see that revolution wither away like a palm tree struck by lightning. We will also make it impossible for Eckermann to place his foot on Haitian soil again except at the risk of his life. He is the brains of the revolutionary faction, and he is its money bags!"

"If it is a German ship that he has chartered in Jamaica, and we seize her," broke in Clare, "it will mean very uncomfortable relations with Germany, will it not?"

"Germany," answered LeRoy, "is even now crowding us for a substantial payment on the last extortionate loan she forced on us. I must persuade Charlemagne to pledge to her without delay enough of the coffee revenues for the year to make that payment. This is a bumper year and should amount to not less than eighty thousand pounds. That would go far towards appeasing her insatiable appetite.

"Yes, of a certainty, if Eckermann's gun-runner should be a German ship, and we confiscate her cargo, it would precipitate a delicate situation. If we do not seize her Nord Alexandre will be pounding at the gates of the capital within a fortnight after he has its arms and ammunition."

"Then we are fairly between the devil and the deep blue sea'" laughed Clare.

"You find it a delightful dilemma," LeRoy observed dryly. "Well, the die is cast. Tomorrow I send word by the Jamaica boat to Larraque, my agent there. He will track Herr Eckermann, and give us timely warning of the gun-runner and its port. I think it will be Gonaives, for that is a railhead, and always an important link between the revolutionary armies and the coast."

"And I," said Clare Dillon, "will have steam ready at a minute's notice. Thank heavens, Gaston, the squadron is fit to tackle any German ship from the Kaiser's flagship down!"

He broke into the rollicking chorus of a Parisian music-hall ballad, and then filled the glasses before them.

"To the Haitian navy, and destruction to any ship that flies the flag of our ancient foe!"

They drank the toast standing. Gaston LeRoy's eyes were dark and somber with forbiddings, and Clare's aglow with the battle-call of the Irish Wild Geese fighting, as always, under an alien flag.

Charlemagne, acquainted with the new turn of affairs, swung his whip. Under its lash, the Haitian senate rushed through a law that pledged forty per cent. of the coffee revenues to amortization of the German loan. That action, he well knew, would go far towards softening any reprisals that Wilhelmstrasse might adopt, should Admiral Dillon take the unprecedented step of seizing a German ship and confiscating its contraband cargo.

Meanwhile the efficient net of Gaston LeRoy made daily hauls. Day by day familiar faces were no longer seen on the

streets, in the cafés and in the market-places of Port-au-Prince. The net was no respecter of aristocrat or peasant. The positive identification of Herr Eckermann as the head of the revolutionary movement, and the thorough search of his papers had provided the necessary clews. Out on the drear sand-flats of Dessalines Field, ragged musketry volleys took toll of the leaders. The gates in the gray walls of the Penitencier Nationale closed on others, while a fortunate few were granted the privilege of exile. Inexorably the brown and black hands drew in the net.

Out in the harbor Clare Dillon's squadron strained at their leash for word from Larraque in Jamaica. For a fortnight LeRoy's men worked day and night, and then came word from Larraque.

The capital was still plunged in darkness when the squadron steamed out for its blockade stations. To Cape Haitien and Port-de-Paix on the northern coast went the *Dessalines* and the *Hyppolite*. To Mole St. Nicolas went the *Christophe*. To Gonaives headed the *Cete-a-Pierrot*, and at dawn the four-starred flag of Admiral Dillon whipped out from her mainmast head.

THREE days later the Hamburg-American liner, *Marcomania*, stood boldly in at noon into the mangrove-lined harbor of Gonaives. The rumble of her anchor chains and the cloud of red rust from the hawse-pipe through which they ran had barely died away when a boat shot out to her from the *Crete-a-Pierrot*.

It needed only a cursory inspection of the boarding officer, carried out despite the vehement protests of the burly captain, to bare the brazen masquerade of cases and boxes that were packed to the brim with arms and ammunition for Nord Alexandre's blacks. Back of that startling visit and search were the cutlasses and pistols of the boarding party, and back of them the potent threat of the *Crete-a-Pierrot's* starboard battery, with its crews at the guns.

Back to the capital went the contraband of war. By one audacious stroke Admiral Clare Dillon had armed the poorly equipped troops of Charlemagne, and up in the hills Nord Alexandre waited vainly for the rifles without which he could not begin his campaign.

Then came a lull in the storm, but to Clare Dillon it meant that the Kaiser, in far-off Berlin, was closing his mailed fist for a dramatic gesture. Had the gun-runner been a craft of insignificant tonnage the seizure, softened by Charlemagne's pledge of the coffee revenues, would doubtless have ended in Haiti's apology following the interchange of diplomatic notes. But the *Marcomania* was the queen of the great fleet of German liners that plied the Caribbean, and a reserve auxiliary cruiser of the high sea fleet.

Except for short dashes out to sea for target practise the *Crete-a-Pierrot* lay at anchor off Gonaives, decks cleared for action, steam up, waiting for the next move of the Kaiser. The rainy season was on. Over the low, mangrove-lined shores heavy mists hung at dawn and at sunset, miasmatic, fever-breeding.

The sanitary condition of the town was deplorable. Clare Dillon, exhausted by strain and incessant labor, was one of the first victims of the scourge of malaria that fastened upon Gonaives. Daily rains that drenched him, pitiless suns that burned him, had finally exacted their toll.

Gaston LeRoy found him a pitiful wreck of his old self when he boarded the flagship with despatches and the latest news from the capital of the still abortive revolution.

An hour later he had Clare ashore in the home of the chief of the Gonaives Arrondissement, where the change from shipboard life and efficient care would go far towards his recuperation.

The change was already working for the better when a sleek German cruiser stood boldly in the harbor and came to anchor a scant thousand yards from the *Crete-a-Pierrot*. To Clare Dillon, shaken with fever and pale as a ghost, came the stern ultimatum that the captain of the cruiser, the *Panther*, had delivered.

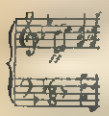
"Surrender within an hour, or I will blow you out of the water!" ran the challenge.

It transformed Clare Dillon from a fever-shaken convalescent into a dynamic sailorman. Deaf to the protests of Gaston LeRoy and the scandalized nurse and to the accompaniment of blithe badinage, he forced them both to help him into the full uniform of his rank. At breakneck speed they drove to the landing place where the *Crete-a-Pierrot's* gig was still in waiting. As he stepped into the stern sheets and took the tiller-ropes Clare Dillon shouted gaily:

"At the Gonaives Club at eight tonight, Gaston. We will celebrate, you and I, and all Gonaives with us!"

On board the flagship he found the crew on the verge of panic. Swiftly he wrought order out of chaos with orders that came fast and clean-cut as machine-gun fire. They were far the reverse, however, of the decisions he had long dreamed of. His witless engineer had allowed the fires to die out. Without steam with which to maneuver it was stark suicide to fight the *Panther* with its superior gunfire and armor at close range.

Severe as the blow was, he accepted it with characteristic nonchalance, and the black officers and crew worked like madmen under the spur of his incisive orders and the blue magic of his smiling eyes.

There remained but ten minutes of the ultimatum, and Clare Dillon had all but completed his audacious plans. From stem to stern, from maintruck to keelson, the *Crete-a-Pierrot* had flowered out in the colorful bunting reserved for gala occasions. Her decks were wet and odorous with kerosene. The covers had been whipped away from the powder magazines. At the foot of the mainmast lay the red and blue battle flag, made fast to signal halliards.

DUSK was coming to the harbor on swift wings when the flagship's bugler sounded the shrill clear notes of "Abandon ship!" Off to starboard the menacing, black muzzles of the German cruiser were trained on the gaily dressed Haitian gunboat. On her decks the German boarding party was falling into ranks.

With the last thin note of the bugle the crew of the *Crete-a-Pierrot* moved in perfect discipline over the sides into the boats waiting at the gangways and beneath the outswung boatbooms. On the quarterdeck Admiral Clare Dillon lifted his cocked hat in silent farewell to the men whom he had molded from a mob into a smart man-o'-war's crew.

As the boats shoved clear and made for the beach that was lined with all of Gonaives, he walked briskly forward. At the foot of the mainmast he halted. To the short, steady strokes of his arms the battle flag moved up to the peak of its hoist, a bundle of red and blue. One sharp tug. It broke clear and whipped out to the sea breeze in defiance to the enemy.

And now, with steps that were unsteady and slow, Clare Dillon posted himself over the opened hatches of the main battery magazine forward. In one hand he held his watch. In the other the muzzle of a loaded revolver swung in uncertain circles. It was only by a supreme effort that he could keep his feet.

As the minute hand ticked to the hour mark the revolver flashed. Like an overripe melon the *Crete-a-Pierrot* opened up to the terrific explosion. The crashing salvo of six-inch guns from the *Panther* whipped up futile geysers of green water where only the mastheads of the *Crete-a-Pierrot* and a welter of wreckage marked her anchorage. At the main the red-and-blue battle flag still waved in defiance.

True to his appointed rendezvous Gaston LeRoy was at the table he had reserved for dinner at eight at the Gonaives Club. There were two covers on the table and two champagne glasses beside them. To the friends who trooped in, serious of face, and yet thrilled with pride over the glorious end of the *Crete-a-Pierrot*, Gaston LeRoy could offer no more than a silent nod. When the sun had set in a riot of color over the grave of the *Crete-a-Pierrot* it had been to him as though all the color of his life had died with it.

The heavy stamp of feet on the stairs below and a chorus of raucous laughter woke him from his sad reveries. Into the quiet club-rooms trooped the captain and staff of the *Panther* in white uniforms and pith helmets, swords clanking at their heels. Behind them came Herr Eckermann with his cold gray eyes flushed with elation.

It was halfway through his cheerless dinner that Gaston LeRoy's brooding eyes saw Herr Eckermann rise unsteadily to propose a toast. The big hand of the German captain caught him by the arm and the banker collapsed drunkenly in his seat. Then, with uplifted glass brimming with champagne the *Panther's* captain boomed out in his native tongue:

"Gentlemen, the Kaiser! *Hoch!*"

Of all the Haitians in the room, Gaston LeRoy alone was on his feet. He had caught a quick, familiar tread mounting the stairs. On his face was the imprint of a bewildered, incredulous joy.

Into the room, gone silent again under

the German insult, strode Admiral Clare Dillon. His full-dress uniform was wet and bedraggled, his right arm was in a sling of dirty muslin. His eyes glowed like burning embers out of a face that was ashy pale. With the proud, heads-up tread of an admiral of the fleet and with superb insolence in his level gaze, he passed the stupefied Germans and joined Gaston LeRoy. Short gasps of amazed disbelief broke the silence, and more than one superstitious Haitian swiftly crossed himself with trembling fingers.

"Gaston!" his voice came in a whisper. "A glass of wine, and be quick, my dear friend. How I made my way ashore from a bit of wreckage to which I had clung is a nightmare. I only know that a peasant woman found me on the beach, helped me to her hut, and between the two of us we managed to bandage my arm and side. You must pardon this deplorable toilet."

The whisper tailed off into thin air as he gulped down the glassful and speedily refilled. With the litheness of a schoolboy he leaped from his chair to the table. His free arm ripped away the bandaged loop from his right arm. With the glass held high above his head he cried—

"*Vive* Haiti! Death to all Prussian swine!"

His voice rang clear as a bell over the awakened tumult of Haitian cheers to that intrepid toast. The old, insouciant smile was back on his face, and his eyes were dancing. It was only for a brief flashing moment he held that pose, but it was to live long in the crowded memories of Gaston LeRoy. A sudden pain twisted the smiling face. The glass fell from relaxed fingers and shattered. In a crumpled heap he crashed to the floor.

With trembling fingers Gaston LeRoy tore open the collar of the blue tunic. They came out wet with the blood that gushed out from beneath the bandage that had slipped from over a gaping wound.

"Splinter of boat that went in there," Clare Dillon whispered faintly.

For a moment his sea-blue eyes rested fondly on Gaston LeRoy. One convulsive shudder and the soul of one more audacious, lovable Irish Wild Goose had gone on its last flight. Gaston LeRoy kissed the damp brow reverently and straightened up. With a dozen swift strides he was squarely before the captain of the *Panther*. His arm shot out to full length like a rapier's thrust.

"Go!" his voice rose in shrill rage. "Go! Or by all that I hold holy the men of Gonaives will tear you limb from limb and toss you to the sharks in the harbor that you have defiled!"

There was a sinister menace in that pointed arm, a deadly challenge in the ring of black men and brown that had formed in triple ranks about the Germans. There was cold truth in that threat and the Germans rose. Their swords clanked at their heels as they turned and left, but not a hand was on its sword hilt.

Once more Gaston LeRoy's arm shot out like a rapier. His fingers fastened like hooks of steel on Herr Eckermann's throat. The fear of death was in the cold gray eyes of Herr Eckermann, but the German officers stalked stolidly on.

"You, Herr Eckermann, will not go with your friends," said Gaston LeRoy in a voice that had suddenly gone cold. "I have kept a rendezvous tonight with a gallant soul that fought its way through hell to keep it with me. You will keep a rendezvous tonight.

"It will be with a keen blade, or with the muzzles of a firing squad, or, for I am in a generous mood, you may drink one glass before we start for that rendezvous. There is a drink that we brew in the hills. You should know it well, for Nord Alexandre is an expert in its use. It is pure white, which you are not. It is without odor, which you are not, Herr Eckermann. I think you will choose it, for it kills even more quickly than a knife or a bullet. Come, for I have other work to do. Your choice?"

DOCTOR

by **Harold Willard Gleason**

AS I was holy-stonin' decks
One day in Plymouth Sound,
I felt two eyes a-watchin' me;
And, as I turned around,
There within the hatchway stood,
His sharp face gray like rock,
The ship's cook, or a demon—
I doubted which, half-dreamin',
But chose to call it seaman—
It was Doc!

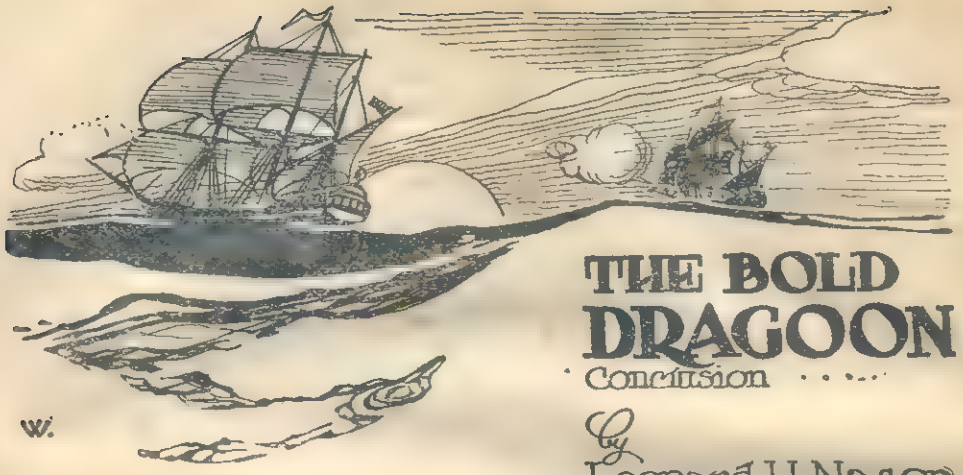
Before we'd sailed upon our course
Much longer than a week,
The ship's log held a mutiny,
A murder and a leak,
A fore-to'gallant blown away,
A splintered rudder-stock;
And likely some one framed him,
But the ragin' Old Man blamed him,
And the crew agreed "You've named him!
It is Doc!"

He'd hardly leave his galley then;
He moped there night and day,
Only when he stood his watch
Or cleared the chow away.
Bent of back and gaunt of cheek,
With eyes that seemed to mock—
Cold and gray and gleamin'—
And we simple-minded seamen,
We held him for a demon!
That was Doc!

Then upon the fever-winds
Or the oily tides,
Came the plague, with ghastly fangs
Tearin' our insides.
Ravin' men and dyin' men,
And ne'er a one could walk;
But one soul never failed 'em—
He dosed 'em for what ailed 'em
Or, weighted, over-railed 'em—
It was Doc!

Then more healthy weather blew
And the fever passed.
When we got about again,
Tripes! we stood aghast
As we saw who'd warped us all
Safely through the shock;
Sleepless, silent, nursin'
Twelve madmen, wild and cursin';
The shades of Death dispersin'—
It was Doc!

To the galley hung with pans
Twelve swabs trooped one day.
There stood Doc, a-choppin' hash,
Bent and cold and gray.
And we told him, stammerin'—
It was hard to talk—
Sorry we'd been hateful,
'Pologized, were grateful—
"There—You've said a plateful!"
Growled the Doc!



THE BOLD DRAGOON

Conclusion

By Leonard H. Nason

Author of "Eye-Wash," "Rockets at Daybreak," etc.

The first part of the story briefly retold in story form

IT WAS in June, 1743, that we routed the French at Dettingen in Bavaria. We had been without food or fodder for many a day, and as soon as the French broke, leaving open the road to Hanau, the army forgot the enemy in its eagerness to reach its base of supplies.

My nag was in such a plight that I was left behind, and in the night came upon a French officer and killed him after a long-drawn fight. I relieved him of a fine sword, rings, gold buttons and other booty. Then Australian marauders, our allies, set upon me. Badly wounded, I lay out in the marshes until a party of our own men found me and carted me to Hanau.

A physician named Gulf took me into his house and cared for me in exchange for one of the rings I had taken from the Frenchman. When the army marched out of Hanau I was left behind, for I was still very weak. Some days later I was discharged although I was in no state to travel, and the doctor would have robbed me of my last gold button had I given him the chance.

At a near-by tavern I met a youth, Viscount Barnet, who had deserted his post because he wished to reach England in a great hurry. An estate awaited him there, but he was without funds and in debt. He suggested that I let him exchange my booty for money, lend half the sum to him, and that we travel together to the coast. This I agreed to do, although Gulf cursed me for a fool, and went so far as to offer me a commission in the army of the Pretender, Charles Stuart, but I cursed him back and left his house.

We started, the viscount and I, in the Frankfort diligence, but were held up by a scouting party which tried to slaughter us, for the officer knew that Barnet was a deserter. We were almost beaten when a party of horsemen that I had seen at Gulf's house, came to our rescue. They cut down the scouting party and rode away. No sign could I find of Barnet until I reentered the diligence and found him hiding beneath a bale of goods.

"Do you owe those men money?" I asked.

"Well, not money, but something of the sort," said he, and then would speak no more, but held his peace, chewing upon his fingers.

WHEN we reached Frankfort we hired horses to continue our journey. A fortnight later we put up at an inn near Brussels, where there were many English officers. One of them picked a quarrel with us, and the viscount killed him. He escaped, leaving me to defend myself as best I might until knocked down and sorely beaten.

I awoke in a stable midden. The viscount was there and helped me mount my horse and away. But I was so weak and bruised that I could not sit my horse and fell off very soon. Barnet left me, for he was in grave danger, agreeing to meet me at the sign of the *Gaper* in the town of Williamstadt.

Next day I found that the viscount had taken my last penny, and I had to beg my way afoot to the seaport. There I found an English boat whose skipper first took me later to the sign of the *Gaper*, where I was told the viscount had sailed the week week before for England, and then aboard his vessel.

I slept so soundly that I awoke only when we were well out to sea. On board were the six travelers who had saved us from the scouting party. They disclosed themselves as agents of the Pretender, and their leader asked me to serve with them. When I stoutly refused I was given until we reached the Coast to agree to his proposal or die.

When we hove to, however, we were set upon by Gagers and soldiery and I escaped in the dark. The near-by villagers were in arms because a local tavern keeper had been taken by the press gang and forced to enlist. After being embroiled with them for half a night I broke away and made my way across the moor until a coach overtook me, and I climbed into the "rumble-tumble." I slept soundly until the coach was halted by a highwayman. I hid by the

"The Bold Dragoon," copyright, 1925, by Leonard H. Nason.

roadside, my sword still lying in the rumble-tumble, until the coach drove off, then I leaped out of hiding and took possession of the highwayman's loot. One man, who had tried to resist, sprawled unconscious and unnoticed in the middle of the path.

Having relieved the highwayman of his ill-gotten gains I helped him to mount with the toe of my boot, and sent him on his way.

I SET about reviving the man who lay in the roadway, and found him to be none other than my viscount. His excuses for having played me so many scurvy tricks were so convincing that I believed him. We went to an inn where we found the passengers of the coach bewailing their losses. At once the viscount denounced me, saying that I was a confederate of the highwayman and had upon me all the booty. When this was found to be true I was assailed and thrown into a dark stable and locked in. But the landlord who had found my sword in the rumble, thought me to be an agent of the Pretender. He set me free and I quickly took the road to London.

There, one night, I fell in with a party of young bloods and set them to flight after killing one of them with my sword. A friend of the dead man stood his ground and, having disarmed him, I found that once again I had Viscount Barnet at my mercy. He made haste to tell me that the man I had killed, the Honorable George Brockhurst, was heir to a rich estate in the Americas. To make amend for all his ill services he suggested that I cross the Atlantic with him. He would impersonate the Honorable George and claim the estate, which we would then share equally. To this I agreed, for nothing seemed to await me in England save starvation.

Passages having already been secured on board the *Gull* we lay safe below and avoided the officers who were seeking us. The first day at sea we found two women passengers aboard: The Widow of the Honorable George and an attendant. She, too, was going to America to claim her late husband's estate.

She was young and pretty, and I spent much time with her, which sorely vexed my viscount, for he was afraid she might cheat him out of the estate. I told him that it was hers by right and that, for all of me, she might have it.

His eyes glittered as he retorted—

"One death got me this estate—another may keep it for me."

I WAS of two minds, whether to cram my sword down his throat, or to go at once to Mrs. Brockhurst and acquaint her with the whole story. Finally I decided to hold my peace. Perhaps we would all perish on these dreary waters and the estate revert to the Crown for lack of heirs.

Indeed such a solution of the thing seemed very probable. The gale continued to increase. The ship rolled fearfully and stood first upon her bow and then upon her stern, so that a man could not keep upright.

The water no longer whispered and chattered along the sides, but hammered and beat and hammered, like a King's messenger with his sword hilt. The water came down into the berth in great quantities, so that very soon it was almost mid-leg deep on the floor.

Once I struggled out on to the deck, but it was perishing cold, sleet and snow drove across the ship like myriad javelins and the sailormen hurried by with anxious faces. The sea was a moor no longer, but range after range of mountain peaks, their tops white and foaming, like the Pyrenees capped with snow. I have faced death many times, perhaps as much or more than most men of my age, but never did it seem so distasteful as on that winter sea, where all was cold and gray and horrible.

There came a day when the wind went down somewhat, but the sea was still very high. I left the viscount rolled in his bed covering snoring heavily, and went on deck. I had not been there very long before I espied the cabin door open, and Mrs. Brockhurst came forth, and—joy unspeakable—alone. At once I was at her side and she turned with a glad cry.

"Oh, I have been so frightened the last few days! That terrible storm! And it was so dark in there!"

She came quite close to me and perforce must take hold of my arm to steady herself against the motion of the ship. We went to the rail and I held her very tightly, so that she should not fall over and we stood thus a long time, watching the leaping of the waves. Once or twice she sighed gently and looked up at me.

Now we of the mounted forces are ever told that ours is an arm of opportunity, that cavalry that sees its moment of advantage and hurls at that instant the full shock of its attack upon the enemy, horses thundering, swords waving, and men shouting, must be irresistible. So then, seeing my moment of advantage, I held the fair lady a bit closer and proceeded to implant a chaste kiss upon her cheek. At that she struggled a bit, but not too hard, then cast down her eyes, looked at me again and, having no use for the kiss that I had given her, returned it to me again.

"Ho, there!" bellowed a vulgar voice from over our heads. "Below there, I say!"

I looked up startled and very confusedly stepped away from the lady. The master of the ship stood at the head of the ladder that went to the helmsman's place and

peered down at me. When he saw that I perceived him, he beckoned me.

"Could you step up here a moment, sir?" he called, and with a great deal of wonderment I went, after seeing Maud—I could call her that now—into the cabin, and having kissed her hand at parting.

I had never been in this part of the ship before. The platform or poop deck, I believe they called it, was over the cabin roof and was very lofty. Forward I could see the whole stretch of the deck and beyond the ropes and the masts, the mountainous waters, into which our ship crashed and threw up fountains of white water. Two men stood straining at the helm and one peered over the stern at something with a perspective glass.

"Here," said the master, taking the glass from the other man, and holding it out to me, "have a look."

I adjusted the glass and peered through it, but could see nothing but waves.

"What is there to be seen?" I asked.

"Here," said the other man, whom I remembered was the man we had first seen on the vessel, and who was one of the officers.

"Here!" And he pointed the glass for me.

Sure enough, there was something there. I thought at first it was a stick floating, but after a time, when I had steadied the glass, and looked more carefully, I perceived what it was.

"Why, 'tis a ship," I exclaimed.

"A French ship," added the master, looking at me very hard.

"Well, what then!" I cried, for there was a feeling in the air that boded me no good. "What is the idea of showing me this ship?"

"Why this," answered the master. "She is a French ship and we have had her in sight since daybreak. She was visible from the masthead, black against the rising sun, and now, as you see, she can be seen from here. When we alter our course a point or two, she does likewise."

"How does this concern me?"

"If she comes up on us, which she will do, I shall expect you to speak to her master or whoever is in command and see that he hinders neither my voyage, nor harms my ship nor my goods."

"Are you crazy, man?" I asked him in astonishment. "You rave! What weight can I have with a French captain?"

"Are you not a French officer?" asked the master meaningly.

The man was drunk, or else I was crazy. My head reeled and I staggered and took hold of a rope to steady myself. The swaying and tossing of the accursed vessel was more pronounced on this part of her and was increased by the height of the poop above the deck.

So, what with the effect of my long stay in that pesthole below decks and the blow of the master's question and the heave of the deck, I was taken ill and must perforce seek the rail. When I had somewhat recovered myself, I turned to the master and asked him weakly enough what he meant.

"Did you not come aboard," said he, "bearing a French sword? I have seen enough of them before, for I carried many a soldier back and forth from France to Scotland during the Fifteen. I was but a lad then, but I remember. And I have seen them since, many of them, when I have been in Brest. And not only that, but the next day after you were come aboard, who should come out but a boatload of soldiers looking for a French officer."

I groaned. So the Picinino had gotten me into more trouble.

"I am an Englishman," I said. "A dragoon of Ligoniers. I got that sword at Dettingen. Do I look like a Frenchman? Is there anything about me that suggests a ——, dirty, shoulder-shrugging, eyebrow-lifting, hand-waving monseer? Is there? Is not my speech as good English as your own?

"If yonder ship comes up on you," I cried, "I will do what I can to keep them off your decks if I am able to stand, but it will be with my sword and not with my voice. Any command of mine would have as much weight with a Frenchman as yours with these waves! Moreover, we are not at war with France!"

"That will not stop him from plundering my ship, any more than it stopped the French and English killing each other at your battle of Dettingen. Well, there will be nothing to do but try our heels and if that fails, then we must have a brush with him."

Then he turned to the other man and gave some order touching on the management of the ship.

I WENT directly down into the berth and took the Picinino down from its peg.

"Sword," said I, "I think there is a curse upon you. You have brought me nothing but bad luck since the day I found you and I have a good mind to be rid of you."

But when I drew the blade from the scabbard and felt the balance of it and noted what excellent springy steel it was, and how well it fitted my hand, and what good protection the heavy basket hilt gave to the wrist, I quite forgave it.

"If this Frenchman lays us aboard," I said, "I will have need of a good friend like you."

"What are you muttering about?" demanded the viscount, rolling his head at me sleepily.

"Did you know that we were at war with France?" I asked.

"I heard no talk of it before we left London. Why?"

"There's a French ship in pursuit of us."

"Be —— to it," said he. "I hope they kill us all. Go away and let me sleep," and he turned his face to the wall.

I got a leather bucket and some rags and made shift to dry out the berth, for the water slopped about very much and was quite deep. It took me the better part of the morning, but it was better than lying groaning in my bed. After I had eaten, I felt better and the master of the ship came down and asked us if we had pistols.

Upon my saying we had none, he went away and came back with two for me and a heavy cutlas for the viscount, who had no sword. "The sea is going down fast," said the master, "and we may yet show this man a clean pair of heels. But still we may not, so look to your weapons."

That night the lady appeared, and Doris being yet indisposed, we had a long visit. The Frenchman was still in our wake, and by now the entire ship's company knew of him. If he came up with us on the morrow, then surely we must have a fight and I thought it best to go into it with a clear conscience.

So then, sitting close beside the lady, and holding her hand, she calling me Hugh and I calling her Maud, I told her the entire account of our purpose in going to the colonies, and a full history of all my dealing with the viscount, save only that I did not tell her it was I who had killed her husband.

To my surprize she did not weep or cry, or do any of the things that a woman might do in such a time, but sat silently for a little while.

"I had thought of something like this," she said at last. "I was not aboard here a great while before I found out that the viscount was traveling as the Honorable George Brockhurst. You know that our marriage was a secret one, and I have been using my own name, so that the people of the ship did not know that my name was Brockhurst, too."

"I have known him all these years, you see, for a liar and the son of a lying house, so that I thought at once of villany. As for the estate, I knew nothing of it. I but thought we were going to America. Perhaps George was to surprize me with the news of it later. And I will tell you more. It was Geordie's intention to give this viscount the slip, and to that end he had not told him the proper date of the sailing, but has secured passage for us both and said nothing."

"Ah," I cried. "I see now why the viscount was so surprized to find that the Honorable George was to sail so soon, and had not told him so. But why did he write to Flanders for the viscount, if he did not wish to take him with him?"

"He never wrote. The viscount found it out, and posted with hot haste to lay hold of Geordie and say that he must take him to America with him, or he would lay him in jail for the debt my husband owed him. But what shall I do now? Have you any thought how I shall proceed?"

"That," said I, "we shall see when we have come to land. Meanwhile be of good heart, for I will think of some devise yet." Then I besought her to be very careful, for the viscount was a desperate man and would murder her if he got the chance. "But," I assured her, "I will keep my eye upon him."

"And if there is a fight, you will be careful, won't you, for my sake, Hugh?"

"That I will," I said, and with that I left her.

Yet another day we held upon our course, while the sea became calmer, but the Frenchman stayed with us and gained, so that now he could be made out without a glass. The *Gull* had four small cannon, two of a side, and two wall pieces on the forecastle and likewise on the platform

before the great cabin. These were cast loose and the cordage cleared from about them.

The pikes that stood about the masts were taken down and laid handily about the decks, powder was brought up, and every preparation made for a desperate struggle. A huge copper was filled with water and heated, to be poured upon any one attempting to scale our decks. For my part, I had up the Picinino and ground its edge and overhauled the pistols the captain had given me. The viscount came out of his sullenness enough to come up on deck and assist with the preparations, and indeed seemed to be quite cheered at the prospect of action.

At sunset I was upon the after deck with the master of the ship, looking toward where the darkness was already hiding the French vessel. Who hath not seen, at the far edge of a wide heath, a door suddenly open, letting out a flash of light from the fire within, and then shut again? Such a flash of light came to us across the darkening sea and then, after some little time, the dull crash of a gun.

We looked over the side, but could not see where the shot went, for it was too dark. I scarcely think it came as far as our ship, for we were quite distant from the Frenchman.

"If it comes on to be dark," said the master, "and the clouds will cover that —— moon, we may yet show monseer a trick."

The night indeed was dark and the cold of a sudden became frightful. The sailors cried to each other that there was ice about, and with this new terror I was like to give up the ghost. Great mountains, they told me, of ice, came floating down from the north, floating and floating and peopled with strange and horrible beasts, bears and tigers and wolves and whatnot; and if a ship ran upon one of them it was her death.

SOME time in the night there was a great creaking of yards and groaning of cordage and the ship heeled over tremendously. Upon my going up I found all calm and the sailors coiling down the ropes again. They said they had gone about and were now on another course, intending to throw the Frenchman off the track, a trick they could not do before because of the bright moon of the preceding nights.

The next morning I leaped eagerly on deck to see if we had indeed shaken off the Frenchman, but alas, there was a great fog upon the water, so that from the door that went into our berth I could not see the mast in the middle of the ship.

All day we lay in this fog, the sails flapping and the yards creaking dolefully, while the master and the crew hung over the side, listening and listening.

"What do you expect to hear?" I asked them.

"The sea breaking on the ice. We would fire guns and tell by the sound if there was ice about, but it might bring the Frenchman down upon us."

It was bitter cold, so that I took no pleasure in being on deck, nor any in the viscount's company, who was leaning over the bulwarks with the rest. I had hoped that Maud might come out, but there was no sign of her, nor had I seen her since I had first told her of the Frenchman. I went, therefore, into the berth and lay down and so spent the day, and after supper went to sleep, uncomfortably enough, in that stinking hole under my wet coverings.

I awakened suddenly, flat on my back on the floor of the berth. There was something soft under me that squirmed mightily and then I knew that I had been cast from my shelf and had fallen upon the viscount. There was a tremendous crashing and thumping against the side and a wild shouting on the deck.

"Off my head," said the viscount in a smothered voice. "It is the ice, by the feet of Paul!"

At that we both struggled on deck, for we slept fully dressed, because of the cold. Here all was dark and wet, the dripping sails hanging to the yard and a dank cold about. The men were shouting terribly and there was an echo from the mist that came back at us a hundred fold.

An echo! Indeed it was the ice! There was a black something against our side, grinding and rubbing and long fingers searched above us in the rigging, so that ropes and blocks and spars kept tumbling upon the decks. All was the wildest confusion and the fearful clamor would strike terror to any man, I care not who he might be.

My first thought was for Maud and I leaped up the steps to beat upon the cabin doors and acquaint her with her danger,

but as I stood upon the last step I heard a shout from the black wall against our side. The words were French, that I knew, although I did not know their meaning. I stood transfixed. A block tumbled from aloft and nearly brained me, but a great yellow eye rolled up at me and then rolled back. It was the cabin window of another ship.

"To arms!" I roared. "To arms! The French are upon us! 'Tis a French ship!"

I called at my loudest and leaped down into the waist, but none paid me any heed. I ran from one to the other, but they were all so mad with terror of the supposed ice and the black night that I might as well have sung them a catch for all the heed they paid me.

I stopped then, and thought what to do. That was no echo, that shouting from the blackness; the tones of it were different. It was louder than the clamor on our ship and I thought that there must be silence after a time, for the men would lack breath to howl.

Here I stumbled upon the viscount trying to light a lanthorn with a portfire. At once I seized the portfire from him and dashing to one of the guns that had been ready loaded since the day before, I applied it to the vent. Flame leaped from the muzzle in a wide sheet, lighting up the high bulwarks of the Frenchman, her masts and spars all tangled in our own, the wreck of torn sails, and the seamen standing with open mouths looking down at us.

"To arms!" I bellowed, in the silence after the explosion. "To arms! God save the King!"

IF THERE had been a clamor before, a tumult ensued that would have outshouted all the lunatics in Bedlam. All was a deep blackness, so that no man could see beyond the length of his arm, and men ran about crashing into the masts and falling down the ladders. Some tried to fire the guns, others ran to the racks about the masts or fumbled on the decks for pikes.

A man with a deep voice bayed for some one to kindle lanthorns, while for every word that was shouted on our deck, those on the deck of the French ship shouted two, the French being given to a great deal of noise when any emergency arises. The masters of both ships would have cast off and gotten away into the inky fog, but the yards of the two were so locked and tangled that there was no separating the ships.

I remembered that there was a wall piece or falconet on the forecastle of our ship and I ran thither and trained it down into where I supposed the Frenchman's deck to be and fired it. The flame showed me little beyond ropes and masts and a few men running with great speed. But there were shrieks, so I suppose I had caused some damage.

I also saw that the Frenchman's bulwarks were much higher than ours, but that from where I stood, a crossing might be made into the other ship, where any fight that we were to make must be made, since he could fire down into us and butcher us at will.

As I turned to descend the ladder, there was the most terrible explosion that I have ever heard. The entire side of the enemy ship was one vast sheet of flame. He had fired his broadside into us. Happily the Frenchman had not depressed his guns, or else he could not lower their muzzles sufficiently to sweep our decks, for most of his shot flew straight across our ship and so into the sea. One of them found a mark in the mast, where we found it the next day, and another wounded two men, who both cried out lustily that they were dead, and there was a great rending of wood, but not much harm.

I went down into the waist and at that moment some one on the Frenchman lighted a great fire of some sort or other, so that they could see what they were about. This also gave us some light by its reflection from the sails and I contrived to find the viscount and the master of the ship, whom I told to gather his men and we would launch an attack on them from the forecastle. For this I was heartily cursed and told to mind my own business.

The viscount, however, seized my arm.

"Lead on!" he said. "I care even less for fighting than I do for sailoring, but where you go I will follow," and by reason of this speech I forgave him many things.

We mounted the ladder to the forecastle again, whence we could see down into the Frenchman's decks. They had a fire blazing in an iron basket in the mid part of the ship and by its light we could see them massing, with all manner of pikes and weapons, and before we could cry a warning,

they had tumbled over their bulwarks and were down upon our deck like so many bugs. Our people had meanwhile fled aft and taken position on the after deck before the great cabin, so that the French must climb the stairs to come to them.

"Let us load this barker," I shouted to the viscount, "and we will stir them up a bit."

There was a keg of old iron and nails and broken stuff ready to hand, and another of powder, under a cloth. We had these out and loaded the wall piece and then turned it inboard on its swivel.

"Have a care," I said, "lest we let some of this iron into our own party."

"Be —— to them," said the viscount, and fired the piece.

Then while he reloaded it I skipped across the forecastle to the one that stood on the other side and warmly received with it a number of the enemy who came charging forward to see who was firing into their rear. A deal of howling from the after part of the ship told me that our ironmongery had not gone amiss.

It began to look as if we would shortly have the decks cleared of the French, they being taken in both front and rear, and unable to get on to the after part of the ship, where our company were. The fire basket on the other ship blazed high and lighted the desperate conflict, where the French were trying to gain the poop.

We could see a blade flashing and the men on the upper deck plying their pikes like watermen poling a flatboat. The master of the vessel cried on his men and now and again discharged a blunderbuss or some piece of ordnance equally as heavy into the mob in the waist. These on their part thrust upward with their pikes and howled like a pack of wolves and hacked with their swords, but it was of no avail; they could not make their way up the ladders.

Now, having loaded the pieces on the forecastle again, a lengthy job because of the darkness, we fired them once more into the Frenchman's backs. After this they began to lose heart and some few fell back and essayed to climb into their own vessel, which they finally did and we saw them no more.

Suddenly the fire on the French ship went out, leaving us all in panting darkness. The tumult of the battle aft died out first into confused cries and a hurly-burly of shouts, which I suppose were cries for lights and then at last into complete silence.

Now the viscount was upon one side of the deck and I the other and I heard him call out suddenly.

"Bancroft! They mount the ladder! Ha!" Then scratching sounds and grunting, so that I knew he had closed with some one. Now I had come out of the berth without any weapon, thinking we had fallen upon the ice and I knew that the viscount had none either.

I remembered to have seen a short bar of iron that was some part of the ship's furnishing, close at hand and, after fumbling, I found it and then listened for the sound of some antagonist.

The darkness was as impenetrable as a wall of stone. I could hear grunts and straining and the scuffling of feet across the deck, and I knew the viscount must be holding his own, so I moved toward the ladder that came up on my side of the deck.

As I did, I thought I heard another sound, very soft and stealthy. There must be another man there that moved when I did, and sought to pry a knife into my ribs.

Then as I thought what to do, I smelled a familiar smell, one that brought back to me a thought of Flanders and of encounters there in the darkness on wet nights such as this. I smelled a smell of wine, and onions, and of a skin long unknown to water, and holding my breath and hearkening, in a moment I heard a whistle of breath very carefully let out. Thereupon I raised up my arm and hewed down with the bar with all my strength. He squeaked, whereat I struck again, and after that there was no further sound.

At the same moment, almost, came a most horrid scream from the viscount's side of the deck, so that I knew one of them was down, but which it was, I could not tell.

"I have thrust the portfire into his eye," said the viscount, "and pistoled him with his own weapon. Have any come up your side?"

"One," I replied, "that will shortly go down again head first."

"Listen," said the viscount. We could hear a soft creaking and slight sounds from the ladder, but when we moved quickly in that direction the sounds retreated and we could hear them scurrying aft like so many rats.

ALL was quiet for a little space and we imagined both sides to be catching their breath. Then of a sudden there was a faint pistol shot that seemed to come from the farthermost part of out ship, but low down near the water.

All this time I had been frantic with anxiety concerning Maud and where she had been taken and if it was to a safe place, and the thought was in my mind that she might have fired that pistol from a cabin window. But at the sound of the report there was a tremendous howl from the after deck and a great splintering of wood, then cries of consternation.

"They have boarded us from the stern, by the bones of God!" cried the viscount, and at that we both rushed down the ladder and sped aft.

In the darkness I ran full tilt into a gun and sprawled across it to the deck, where I lay for some time wondering if I had broken my leg or not. At last I made out to rise, and putting out my hand to assist me, I felt a half-pike, which I seized, and by its help stood upright.

There was a great deal of pistol firing going on and exulting yells that never came from English throats, so I feared that the battle went but ill. The fighting had come down from the after part into the waist and steel clashed and feet stamped all about me. It was so black and the thought that the fight was going against us so horrible that I became quite sick at heart. While I was at my wits ends what to do, the fight was suddenly over. I heard a few cries for quarter, the scamper of running feet and then silence.

A voice cried in French, and some one came over the side after that, bearing lanthorns, and began to go about the decks like so many glow-worms. I did, then, a very foolish thing, for I set myself in the shadow of the mainmast and when any one went by me I let him have some of my pike, about a foot or so of it. There would be from time to time a sudden wild clashing of swords and some yelling, but even this died down at last and meanwhile I had disposed of some few.

Had I stayed there, I might have killed them all off one by one, or been discovered and pistoled, but I was consumed with a fever of curiosity regarding Maud and I set forth very cautiously to work my way aft, to go up into the great cabin and see how she had fared, and protect her if possible from the French.

I had gained the foot of the ladder in safety and was wondering how high the pile of corpses was that I could feel blocking it, when up from the door that went into our berth came a number of men with a lanthorn.

We stopped and looked at each other while a man's heart might beat twice. Then one snapped his pistol at me with a loud cry and I thrust down into them with my pike. Another hacked at me with a sword and at the same instant I think three or four must have leaped upon my back, for I fell head first into the clump of men below me and what with them all beating me about the head I had not any sense of what took place thereafter.

CHAPTER VIII

OF OUR CAPTIVITY

I THOUGHT at first that it was raining, but struggling upward through the depths of pain that weighed upon me, I found that some one was trickling water on my face. I rested on this discovery for a while and then essayed further enlightenment and after a good deal of effort I discovered two things: That it was the viscount that poured water upon me from a sponge and that I had but one eye that would open and it but a little.

My head was just upon the point of bursting and every bone in me burned as if it were red hot, so I lay as quietly as I could and wondered whether to be glad that I was alive, or sorry that I was not dead. A little later I tried to speak and found there was some things over my mouth that interfered with speech, which, upon my reaching out my hand to remove, I found were my lips, prodigiously swollen.

"Lie down," said the viscount in my ear, "and let your mind be at peace. We have been taken by the French and you have been beaten like an old sack, but a piece of good fortune has befallen us that bids fair to make up for all our bad luck."

"Maud?" I asked, after a great deal of effort.

"Maud?" repeated the viscount. "Maud? Maud is safe enough, I promise you."

Thereupon I slept or fainted or something of the kind, I never knew which.

I came to myself again later in the day, my head still aching tremendously but much improved, and my mind a good deal clearer. I opened my one eye and could see that it was late in the day and that there were a great number of men in the upper parts of the masts, repairing the damage of the collision.

There was a great deal of new rope and new timber where the yards had been strengthened, so that I guessed the work was nearly complete. I staggered to my feet and crept onto the breech of one of the guns, which gave me opportunity of looking about.

The after ladders that went up to the great cabin were all hacked and cut and the doors of the great cabin sagged outward on their hinges, their panels all splintered. Across the deck from me some French seamen were rubbing brooms about and another one was going about picking up half pikes and pistols, from where they were scattered high and low.

There was no sail set upon the vessel and she had rolled into the hollow of the waves and was wallowing there like a sow. Across from us, at some little distance, lay the French ship, a much larger one than ours, having six guns to the side and a figurehead of Samson rending the lion. She had sail upon her, but those on the mainmast were set against the others in such a way as to hold the vessel stationary.

She had gone around to the other side of us from where she had been during the fight, to prevent, I suppose, our drifting down upon her. There were a number of Frenchmen about our decks, their noses red, and their faces all pinched and blue with the cold, but I saw no Englishmen. I began to fear that they had all been butchered. The French paid me no heed, save to scowl evilly at me now and then, but indeed I suppose I was more an object of pity than of anger.

By this time I was near perished with cold and I was intending to go down for my great coat when I perceived it lying on the deck where the viscount had cast it over me. While I was struggling into it, the viscount himself appeared and beckoned me to go forward with him.

We went down into the crew's quarters and here I found seven other men that I remembered had been of our company, and seven or eight French, seated about a brazier or fire basket, over which one of the number was cooking. The French stood about in a half circle, all armed to the eyes and scowled at us.

"Now, then, said the viscount, "the French captain, who is not really a captain, but a lieutenant, has said that we should have something to eat and after that we are to be taken to our berths and that so long as we behave ourselves, we will have two meals and plenty of water each day and be allowed an hour for excercise, but that at the first sign of disorder, he would clap us all into irons."

The Englishmen, all of whom bore hurts upon them, made no answer, but huddled closer about the brazier. The viscount sat down beside me.

"How is the bold dragoon now?" he asked merrily.

"Well, I am better, but that is not very well, after all. How does it happen that you are spokesman for the French?"

"Aha!" laughed the viscount. "That was a master stroke. Now listen and all that has taken place will be made clear Firstly, I have a goodly knowledge of French, having lived on the continent several years and having, moreover, known a number of French gentlemen in England. So then, the battle having gone against us, I tripped very nimbly to where the captain of the enemy, a very bearded man, was giving orders in a great voice and surrendered myself into his hands.

"Then I informed him, for the purpose of their better protection, that there were ladies aboard and suggested that he put a guard at their door. Having very graciously received my surrender, he went so far as to not only bestir himself for the safety of the widow Brockhurst, but to see that there was not a general massacre of all the prisoners. Indeed, he is a very good sort, that frog eater.

"We put up a —— fight on the poop deck, a very confounded fight, and would have made a successful stand if they had not outnumbered us. I have heard," went on the viscount, "that the other ship is the *Archevèque de Rennes*, a privately owned ship, with a license to prey upon enemy commerce, and much stronger than we.

"The French captain thought they had collided with the ice, as we did, but finding that we were English, they had leaped aboard of us with no semblance of order or command. The fire basket, which was

kept ready kindled for night operations, was lighted and the captain arrived to take charge of affairs on our ship. They lost a great number of men by the stairs and when he saw he was making no headway, the French captain ordered a number of his men back into their own ship, which were those we saw scrambling up the side again.

"These men got out a boat and rowed around under the stern, where they climbed up to our cabin windows by the scroll work, broke them in, and having burst through the cabin doors, came upon us from the rear, which naturally put an end to the fighting."

"Yes, but what became of Maud?"

The viscount clasped his knees and rocked back and forth on the seaman's chest on which we sat.

"That was the best of all," he said. "This *Archevèque de Rennes* is bound for a good long cruise. The captain took our captain, and Maud and her attendant spirit, Doris, into the French ship, where they could have more comfortable quarters. I gather he had an eye for congenial company, for he expects to be gone a year."

"And what happens to us?"

"Why, we are to be into Louisburg at once."

"Then how are we in any better case than those on the other ship, with a chance of rotting in some prison for the next two or three years?"

"Ah, but we will be ashore in the Americas, while they will be at sea and when the cruise is over, will go back to Bordeaux, which is her home port, so we will have no more of troublesome claimants for our estate."

"How are we to claim it ourselves?"

"That," said the viscount, "is something that must be devised."

ONE of the Frenchmen came in at that moment and inquired of the viscount our names and stations on the ship, which the viscount gave him and those of the crew. The mate had been killed and likewise the gunner and all the other men of worth in the ship's company, so those that were left were but common seamen. The captain, who had a slight wound, had been taken into the French ship.

There were, then, five seamen and the two of us, making seven, and we were taken on deck and thrust into a hole from which some of the cargo had been taken and having thrown us down a few rags to cover us against the cold, the cover or hatch was slammed on and we were left in blackness.

"It was for this that we were waiting," said the viscount. "They took some of the cargo from here and transhipped it, not to make room for us, but because they had need of it, I suppose."

I made him no answer, for in addition to the pain of my bruises, I had a heavy and a broken heart. There was that poor girl, alone and friendless, a prisoner of war, and probably lost to me forever. If I had had the chance to say farewell to her, to speak a cheering word, it would not have been so bad, but to part so tenderly and then never to see her again, was almost more than I could bear.

If I had suffered when we were in the berth and could go upon the deck when the spirit moved us and breathe God's fresh air and walk about at will, how much more so was I tormented in that black hole through all those weary weeks? It was wet and fearfully cold and the air was quite unbreatheable, for the hatch would only be taken off in fine weather, which, due to the season, and the fact that we had come into the stormy latitudes, was very seldom.

We slept all together on the deck, huddled close for warmth, like sheep, and put what little covering we had over us. In the morning, so cold and stiff would we be, that we could scarce rise. During the day we walked about and played hide-and-seek in the darkness to keep life in our hearts and warmth in our bodies, but this was miserable enjoyment, for the deck was so low that we could not stand upright, and the ship rolled and pitched so tremendously that the only way to be safe from being flung against the side and grievously bruised was to lie on one's back, and even then it was very hard to stay in one place.

Sometimes we talked of escape and had many plans for seizing the ship and sailing it into a friendly port. The seamen were for the most part willing, jolly fellows, although there was one sullen dog who would take no part in our talk, but sat cursing by himself all day, bemoaning the fact that he had no tobacco. Our principal plan was to seize one of the guards when he was bringing our food and wrest his pistol from him, but this was not very feasible, since whenever the hatch would be opened, several days'

supply of food and water would be lowered down and none ever came into our dungeon.

We thought of another scheme, when we should be on deck, that each one of us should seize the Frenchman that stood nearest him and possess himself of his enemy's weapons, and then gathering ourselves into a band, make ourselves masters of the ship. However, on our first day on deck, it was easily seen that this could not be done.

We were kept together in a close group, with at least ten Frenchmen about us, all very heavily armed and with ferocious beards, who kept wetting their knives in on their palms and examining the locks of their pistols with a very bloodthirsty air, throughout the time that we were above decks.

The French lieutenant stayed upon the poop deck, very resplendent in a dark blue coat with red facings, and much gold lace, which was surprizingly bright for a privateersman. However, when he came down into the waist upon some matter of ship, I saw that the sleeves of his coat were a little overlong and that it fitted but poorly about the shoulders, so I judged that it had not been made for its present owner.

It was at this time, to my very great disgust, that I noticed this officer to be wearing my Picinino, and upon his perceiving me looking at it, he rattled it very vigorously. At this discovery I could have wept, and indeed it upset me more than the knowledge that I would probably never see Maud again in this life.

The torture of the noisome dungeon, the cold, and the uncertainty of our fate was bad enough, but all this time the thought of that poor girl was on my mind and I would lie awake and wonder where she was and if any harm had befallen her, and if she were well kept on that cursed ship.

I had no fear of hurt coming to her from any of the French, for they are a very gallant race and not given to insulting unprotected females. Moreover, Doris could handle any of them, and indeed would have cast them all into the sea, had they put any slight upon her mistress. But there were fearful storms that raged for days, and supposing one of our cruisers came down upon the Frenchman and there was a battle and the Frenchman should be sunk, what then would become of Maud? These were fearsome thoughts and kept me awake for many a long night.

It was a long, long time that we lay in the belly of that ship. All our plans of escape came to naught, for one day one of the seamen suggested that among us there was no man capable of navigating a ship and that we could not compel the French officer to sail her for us, for he would not know whither he was taking us and he might sail us into a French port in spite of all.

It was very shortly after this discovery that a great storm came upon us, far worse than any we had had before. The ship rolled far down upon one side and then back upon the other, tumbling us to and fro so that we could not sleep, nor sit, nor stand, nor do anything but fly from side to side, like peas in a rattle.

Moreover, our water keg was overset in the darkness and all our water ran out and none knew of it until some one cried out that he was smitten and found that the empty keg was rolling about and had rolled into him. We were in there then without water an unbelievable time, a most terrible time, and suffered thirst and hunger and misery unbelievable.

We could hold no conversation with each other because of the thunder of the seas upon our decks and a man could not lie down and wait patiently for the coming of death because of being hurled about so. The water began to pour down upon us from the hatch, which had been broached by the seas, and in a very short time we were as wet as fish.

We shouted and called but none paid us any heed. Indeed I doubt if they heard us. At last there was a most terrific crash, a veritable roar of thunder, the water came in through the hatch in sheets, and a wild wailing cry came down to us from the deck.

The next moment the hatch was torn off bodily and a white face appeared at the opening. A man called to us something that I could not understand, for I have no French, for all I have fought against them for a goodly time, but very shortly a ladder was thrust down and we managed to struggle up it to the deck, after great effort and many sore falls. It was high time, for the water in that black hole was well over our knees and all our bed covering was afloat in it.

When I had come upon the deck, I seized hold of a rope beside the viscount and steadying myself as well as I could against the motion of the ship, which leaped and plunged like a fractious horse, I looked

about me to see if there was any sign of encouragement.

"This is a terrible storm," I cried in the viscount's ear.

"It is that," he agreed, "but I have no care how it blows."

"Are you mad?" I cried. "What do you mean? Do you want us all to perish in these wintry seas?"

"No," he answered, "but I think that no matter how the tempest rages or the waves leap, they leap just as high and the peril of death is just as great, where that Brockhurst woman is."

"What has she done to you?" I cried in rage.

"She would take my estate from me," he answered.

Whereat so great was my disgust that I looked about for another rope to cling to, so that I might get away from him, but there was none near.

Oh, it was a fearsome sight that hungry sea! Snow fell heavily, swirling and twisting, and hissed in to the ocean. The wind blew with tremendous force and the ropes moaned and shrieked, as if they were in as great terror as we. Enormous billows reared their heads alongside the vessel and shook their white locks at us, and bellowed, and then lay down again and shoved the vessel with their shoulders. Every now and then one would leap aboard with a most awful roar, and curl across the decks.

The first one of these so frightened me that I let go my hold upon the rope and so was carried off with the rushing water and hurled against the side of the ship. It was a mercy that I was not carried into the sea, but as it was I had a great number of new bruises to add to those I had received after the battle, which were scarce healed, and the salt water getting into my cuts, stung most exquisitely.

After that I clung to any handhold I could find and held my breath whenever one of those gray lions of the sea sprang at me. The murk was so thick that one could not see but a little ways beyond the vessel's side, just far enough to perceive the first line of billows, and farther than that was just a gray wall, out of which came roarings and hissings such as never mortal man heard before.

In a little while the viscount came down to where I was and putting his mouth close to mine, cried:

"They have brought us up to help save the ship. If you wish to live, lend a hand at the ropes! We are lost in the tempest and are very near our death. Hark!"

I listened and between the gusts of the wind, a faint sound of guns came to me, at regular intervals—*berroom! boom! berroom!*

"A FIGHT?" I shrieked at him.

"'Tis the sea beating upon a cruel shore," he answered me. "'Tis the pounding of the waves upon rocks, whither we are driving madly and if we can not keep her off, we must all perish!"

Then he was gone, sliding down the deck and repeating his words to the other Englishmen, where they clung to rope and spar.

No battle had ever half the terror of that wild storm. In battle a man has at least a weapon to protect himself, his enemy is a man such as he, and as fearful, and if one is wounded, the soft ground is but a little way. But here at sea there is no defense. The waves roll on and on like charging columns of horse and there is no stopping of them, nor any thought that this must be the last, for there are no more. The seas are full of them and one goes by to give place to a hundred. And there is no surrender, nor any fate but to go down beneath those cold gray seas for miles and miles and miles, and be devoured by the fearsome monsters lurking there.

So all that day we had a weary time of it, going now this way, now that, hither and yon, and the thunder of the sea upon the land growing ever louder in our ears. The rushing wind would blow stronger and carry it from our ears, so that we would think we were at last getting away, but then there would be a lull and the sound would be nearer and have an exulting note in it, as if those hungry billows saw their prey already within their grasp.

Some of the French were doing what they could to bail out the hole where we had been, but finding this impossible, they had made shift to repair the hatch and cover it over with cloth to keep the ocean out of that place. As for me, I was hounded about the decks and when a rope was put into my hands I pulled on it. Then after the day was advanced, I was put to bailing water out of a kind of well, with a bucket on the end of a long rope. This was a heart-breaking, back-rending task, for there

was nothing to hold on to to secure one's self against the heaving of the ship.

When night came upon us, it was as if a black cloth had been dropped over us. The howling of the breakers was continuously in our ears now, a terrifying, most appalling clamor, so loud that a man could not hear any other sound.

Shortly after this, as if by common consent, every one ceased doing whatever task he was upon and let fall rope, sail, or bucket and took to his prayers. The lieutenant went into the cabin and came out with some religious picture, which they carried onto the forecastle, all in a group, and having knelt down, they elevated the picture and let the ship take its course.

Having no one at the helm, she very soon turned broadside to the sea and the mainmast, being weakened by a cannon shot in it during the battle, fell over the side with its gear. After that we scraped once or twice on the sand and then were lifted high on the sea and carried forward a great way, where the water cast us down as a wrestler casts an adversary, so that the back of the ship was broken.

Then the sea, whooping and charging in from the darkness thundered down upon us and carried all those in the forepart of the ship to destruction, for we could hear them shriek even above the wind and the thunder of the seas.

The viscount and I and the British seamen, not being of the religion of those who were masters of the vessel, had gone into the after part of the poop to make our peace with God, and this part being higher than that other, was somewhat out of the path of the seas, and would be safe until the ship should be broken in pieces.

In a very little while it was dark. The viscount and I managed to clamber down so that we might enter the great cabin, for we thought to find some shelter there during the night. The doors that had been broken in during the battle had only been patched and never really put in a state of strength, and the seas that now made a clean sweep of the deck at every surge were foaming through them, and splashing about the floor.

There were three smaller cabins that led off from the main one, and I thought with a pang that Maud had lived in one of them, and I hoped that she might be safer than I was at that moment.

It was very cold in there and the water was quite deep, so we lost all hope of sheltering there until daylight, even if the ship should last that length of time. The viscount had kindled one of the hanging lanthorns with his steel and as he took it down to carry it on the deck, I saw what caused my heart to know its first joy since since the taking of the ship by the French. My Picinino hung from a peg and I took it down and belted it on with a glad heart. Just what I should do with it in that time of shipwreck and deadly peril I did not know, but the feeling of it upon my thigh gave me a great deal of encouragement.

We splashed out with the lanthorn and when we were come to the deck, found that both ladders were gone, so that we had to get to the poop by clambering up the side of the ship, not a difficult feat, since the vessel leaned very much shoreward.

"Now what to do?" asked the viscount. "We are still alive, but that is the most that can be said. I wonder how far off the shore is."

"I can not see a thing," I answered, "but the snow and the blackness and the galloping waves. I doubt if there is any one left on the forecastle. See, the ocean is halfway up the mizzen and we have not been able to see the deck since she struck."

"What are those sailors croaking about?" asked the viscount, pointing to where the seamen stood in a group, their heads together. I went over to them and they told me that one of them was familiar with storms in those latitudes, and that we were probably come ashore upon the coast of New Scotland and that we had struck at slack tide.

He said that when the high tide came, it would come with a rush and overwhelm the ship, and if we would make a raft, we might win to the shore on it. We set about making one at once, but there was nothing that we could get at to make it with. The men were able to haul up two broken masts or yards and made some attempt to lash them together, but what with the cold and the continuous breaking of the seas over the deck, and the black darkness, for the viscount's lanthorn had been put out as soon as we had gained the poop, we could make no headway and so the attempt was given up.

I wonder I did not die amidst the horrors of that fearful night. We were wetted through and through by the breaking of the

seas, the cold was terrible, and the part of the deck under the bulwarks, that was a little sheltered against the waves, was very quickly filled with the driving snow, exceeding wet and uncomfortable.

A man meets his fate in God's blessed daylight with a light heart, but it is ill waiting to die in the fearful blackness of the night, with a howling storm, and hungty waves bellowing, and the surf thundering beyond the wall of darkness.

I think some of the seasmen died during the night, but of that I can not be sure. The viscount and I huddled beneath my great coat and sang lustily to keep ourselves alive. The night seemed endless. We sang "Three Ladies from France," "Lango Lee," and a great many songs of the camp which he did not know, but could carry the chorus. We sang and sang with the taste of the salt sea in our mouths, until our throats were very near to cracking.

I remember that at this time I bethought me how thirsty we had been in our dungeon, but upon coming out of it we had felt no thirst, nor had I had any drink for a long time, but it did not bother me. I suppose it was from the continuous wetting of the sea.

Of a sudden the viscount gave a cry.

"Look!" he shouted, "the day comes!"

It was even as he said. We could see a grayness in the night and the lower side of the deck was visible, with the body of a man washing to and fro in the water there. There were three more, all close together, in the corner behind the helm, but whether they were alive or dead I could not tell.

The ship moaned and cried and we could hear timbers crashing and the hungry water lapping in the cabin under us. I tried to stand, but could not, being so stiff with the cold, and indeed, I had no great desire to rise, being very comfortable where I was, and having a pleasant warmth begin to steal upon me, with a most enticing desire to sleep. At this time I was very close to death, although I did not know it at the time, but the sea, that had nearly been the end of me, was my salvation.

The deck gave a sudden lurch under us and then came away from the far side of the ship like the crust of a pasty from its dish. I caught hold of the upper side of the bulwark and felt the ship lift under me, just as a great mountain of a wave leaped down upon us. I was very near strangled and torn from my hold and then I felt another great heave upward. My head came out in air for a second and I saw huge waves and a great many timbers sticking up out of the sea, like swimming dogs, and then I went down again.

I could think most clearly all the while, and I knew that if I could get hold of one of those timbers I should be saved, for it would keep me above water. At that moment something struck me a fearful blow in the side, which I instinctively caught hold of, and found my head above water, nor did it go under again. Before I could get the water from my eyes, another wave dashed over me and I was compelled to let go, but whatever it was that held me up did not go from under my arm and in a moment my head was free again. I shook my head, and then opened my eyes.

The viscount was looking directly into my face. He was upon one side of a great spar, and I on the other, and his hands were locked in the collar of my coat, so that we both hung across the spar. The water rushed over my head again and I have no recollection of what transpired after, save that at times I could breathe and at times I was strangled. I know that often I felt ground under my feet, but each time I was swept away and could not come up on the land.

After a long, long time I discovered that I could breathe freely and that the sea broke over me no more. Then I have a dim remembrance of trying to get to my feet, but being bound down by something, of falling down into the shallow water a great many times and of battling with some one. But it was very indistinct, like a poorly remembered dream, and I can not be certain of what did take place.

CHAPTER IX

OF THE QUEST'S ENDING

THERE was a very pleasant warmth about me and a feeling of security. I held my breath for a time, for I feared at any minute the sea would dash over me and strangle me. But it did not, and I heard some one moving and smelt a very strong smell of fish. When I heard the crackling of wood I opened my eyes. There was a vast maze of ropes over my head that I thought must be the wreckage of our masts, but after I had puzzled at them for some

time, I perceived them to be nets, such as fishermen use. There were oars there, and cages, and a great many things that I did not know the use of.

I tried to lift my head, but could not, being too weak, and then I essayed to turn upon my side, but that was likewise impossible. At this, a very red-faced man, heavily bearded, came and looked at me with concern, and having propped up my head, poured a great quantity of burning liquid very pleasant to the taste down my throat, and then left me.

I awakened several times after that and each time was treated to a dose of the hot liquor, and finally was able to stay awake and even to call out weakly. At this the red-faced man appeared and another as like him as two peas, and the first one asked me, with a very strange accent, how I found myself.

"Very well," I replied. "Where is this place?"

"Why, this is Cape Cod," he answered, "right nigh Chatham."

"Is this in French territory?"

The bearded man laughed very heartily.

"No, 'tain't," he said.

Then I inquired the time of day and was told it was about eight in the morning.

"Why, I haven't been here very long, have I?" I asked. "I came ashore about daylight."

The two men laughed some more at this.

"Ye been here a week, young fellar," said the second one. "An' I shouldn't wonder if ye stayed here the rest o' the winter."

After I had chewed this in my mind a while, I asked the man to tell me in full how he had found me and where I was, and if there was any hope for others in the ship's company.

"Well, now," said he, speaking with such a strange accent and with so many uncouth words that I could scarce follow him, "it come on to blow quite a spell back. There was a lot of wind and the sea was pretty rough, and come up way over the marsh. It blew off and on for more than a week, and then come on to snow.

"About the second day of the snow, I went down to see if the tide was gettin' up, fer if it got too high it might take me an' the shack fer a cruise. It was quite a ways up the beach and I pulled a boat I had there out of the way of it. Then this old fellar come down that night and said 'twas so thick the people had give up hope of seein' any ships that day and had gone home. He lives to Chatham, where they make quite a piece out of what the sea brings 'em in the way of wrecks. Now, Obediah, you tell the rest on it."

The other man grinned in an embarrassed way.

"Why 'tain't nuthin'," he said. "I stayed here that night, bein' the storm was so high, and early in the mornin' I took a turn along the beach, for if any ship had come ashore during the night there'd be bits of her floatin' about. Well, I seed sure enough there was one and she wouldn't be much use, either, for she was all broken to bits. There was a few kegs and a lot of broken timber, but nary else, till I come on you and that other fellar under a yard."

Here he pointed and I turned my head and there, on mattresses on the floor, were the viscount and the French lieutenant, the first asleep, but the second with his eyes open, although he did not understand a word, for he had no English, as I afterward found out.

"He had his hands all twisted up in your collar where he'd grabbed holt, and the water had spun you around and like to cut his wrists off. The two of ye was caught across the yard and that was probably what saved ye. That other feller, how he come ashore, I don't know, fer we found him in the snow and he was all frost-bit when we lugged him here. We been down to the beach every day fer a week, but nobody else come ashore alive. There was some that we laid out in the snow till come spring and the ground gets soft, and then we'll bury 'em."

"What did you figger on doin' with that sword there? That load of iron would drag a whale under."

I looked where he pointed and saw my Picinino, very rusty, but still unbroken, standing in a corner.

"As long as that was saved," I cried, "I have no care for anything else!"

"Ye nigh killed that other fellar. That sword swung around so it cut him all to bits." I looked again at the viscount and found that his head and face were badly cut and indeed it must have been from the Picinino swinging about and striking him.

THE viscount came to himself some time later and was very glad to find himself alive. He and I told the two men that had rescued us how we had come to be upon the vessel and who the Frenchman was. The viscount conversed with the lieutenant in French and said that the lieutenant felt that he was very near death and requested us to send his watch and the buttons from his uniform to his mother in Paulliac, near Bordeaux.

He had been washed over the side after we were. Indeed the men on the forecastle had lived throughout the night thinking us all dead, even as we had thought them, but when the ship was broken up, they must have all perished.

The officer said that he had climbed up the foremast and lashed himself to it and had so come to land, where he remembered wandering in the snow. Indeed he was terribly bitten by the frost and his hands and feet were quite black. After a lingering a while in great pain he died, and was taken out to wait until the ground should be soft enough to bury him.

The viscount had had his foot crushed by the yard falling upon it on the beach, so we perforce stayed with the two men until he could walk, which was very nearly two months.

The two men who lived in the hut were fishers, one named Obadiah Hallet and the other Benjamin Sprague. We had two mattresses to sleep on, spread upon the floor, and plenty of salt fish to eat, so that by the time we were able to go I had grave doubts but what I should sprout fins.

"Has it occurred to you," asked the viscount one day, when he could hobble about a little, "how happily things have befallen us?"

"It surely has," I agreed. "Who would have thought that the Picinino would have stayed with me all that time and not burst its fastenings, or to go farther back, who would have dreamed that I should ever get it back again from the French?"

"That cursed sword! To —— with it! Do you see these new scars? It made those while I was holding your silly head above water. Can you think of nothing else but that sword?"

"Aye," I said sadly. "I am wondering what has become of Maud."

"Confound the man," he roared. "By the feet of Timothy. I think he is quite daft and has lost what few brains he ever had! Do you know what brought us here in the first place? Do you remember why we left England?"

"It was something to do with an estate, was it not? But I think we have small chance of getting it, now that the papers are all lost."

"Hear him! Who said the papers were lost? I am not such a lack-wit as you are. Did I not forsee perils upon the deep and the danger of shipwreck and thieves? Look here!" He reached into his bosom and drew out a leathern case all twisted and cracked from the sea water.

"Our honest fishermen had opened it," said he, "but they found that it contained naught but a bar of wax, so they put it back again." He drew out a great lump of wax, flat like a plate, and looking very much like a thick book. He had worn this under his clothes and now that I thought upon it, I had remarked a fullness to his chest on several occasions.

"The French desired it of me." he continued, "but I told them it was a sacred unguent from St. Nicholas of Bari, in Italy, so they left it me."

"What is all this wandering speech about?" I interrupted.

"Hand me that knife."

I passed him the knife and he began to very carefully peal and cut away the wax. After some time I saw what he was about. He had the papers regarding the estate in that block of wax. "Was not that a happy thought?" he cried. "I sealed them up the day before we came from England and they have come safe and dry through the battle and the wreck, and very soon, when I am able to walk, I shall be a rich man."

"*I* shall?"

"Well, of course, so shall you, for you have helped me."

This he said carelessly, but I marked his lips tighten and a shift of his eyes, and I thought in my heart that there was dirt about to be done and made up my mind that I would be the one who would do it.

Affairs took on a brighter turn now. We had come ashore in the latter part of December. Indeed I think it was the day before Christmas, and during January and February we stayed with the fishers, the viscount burning to be away, but forced to wait until he could walk.

He had found that Boston, the port to which we were bound, was but a few days' journey to the north, but we were forced to wait through March till the roads were passable, but when April came, it was impossible to hold him any longer.

"Was it not the greatest of luck," said he, "to have that wonderful storm that would blow that ship all the way from Canada to the coast of New England and then cast her away right where we wanted to land? Truly," he cried, "my fortune has changed at last!"

As soon as the road would permit travel, we engaged a carter who made weekly trips to Boston, to take us up with him. We said farewell to the fishers and would have paid for our entertainment, save that we had not a shilling between us, and so told the two fishers, but they showed no surprize. I doubt not but what they knew it as well as we, having gone through our clothes when they had them off of us to dry.

THE journey was a long one, taking the better part of a fortnight and we lay each night in the cart. At last we were come into Boston, so called after Saint Botolph, and it is very like a town in England. We inquired for an inn and the carter said that the Bunch of Grapes was a good one and showed us the way thither.

It was after dark and there were few people on the streets. When we were come to the inn, we went into the common room. It was high and long with benches around the sides and a great cloud of smoke. There were a great many men in there and one stood on a stool and harangued them.

"Who's for adventure?" he cried. "Who's to go to the north and smoke the rogues out, like woodchucks out of a hole? Step up and sign the scroll, and strike a blow for king and fireside!"

He went on to tell of the generous pay and the opportunities for advancement, and that arms would be furnished at the governor's expense, and all the rest of the blandishments of a recruiter. While we stood at the outskirts of the crowd, a man plucked me by the sleeve and requested speech of me.

"You are a likely fellow," he began. "I knew it the moment you came in the door, even if I had not seen your sword that was made to drink blood with. Will you have a glass of wine, and then shall I put your name down?"

"Not so fast," I told him. "I have no desire to go back across the sea again, having but newly come ashore. Tell me, are we really at war with France?"

"Yes, a ship from England brought us the news the morning."

"Well, I have done enough of fighting in France for a while."

"Why, this is not for fighting in France," he cried, "but in Canada. We must succor the garrison at Canseau. It is but a short sail along the coast. It is a very rich place and lightly held and I have heard," he said, winking, "that the young ladies there are very handsome."

"No," said I, "not just now. I have other matters that must be looked to first, and anyway, I have no desire to be a common soldier again. A little of that goes a great way. When I want to starve to death, I will do it comfortably in a ditch and not in the army. Moreover, I am but lately home from Flanders and I expect to come into an estate."

"If you should change your mind," said the other man, "ask for Sergeant Withington and I will see that you are taken care of."

"Let's break away from this crowd," said the viscount, "and see about getting a bed and something to eat."

We then inquired for the landlord and a man in a white shirt and coatless, left a group that were discussing something with great animation and came over to us.

"Well, sirs," said he, with no great cordiality.

"We would like a bed, my good man," said the viscount, "and something to eat and a bottle of your best. If it could be had in a hurry, we would like it the better, for we have been all day upon the road."

The host looked at us, up and down and across. He had very small gray eyes and a long face and seemed not a whit impressed by the viscount. I felt that he could not be blamed, for the viscount was dirty and bearded and his coat hung upon his breast, for he had cut off the buttons, which were of silver, and given them to the carter for bringing us to Boston. I suppose I was in little better case. The landlord got a candle from the wall and peered at us by its light.

"Any baggage?" he asked, speaking down his long nose in a most curious way.

"Why, we have been shipwrecked," said the viscount, "and lost everything we owned."

"It's customary to pay in advance, in such a case," said the landlord.

"Why, we have no money," answered the viscount, "but that need not hinder our getting food and lodging, for I am the nephew and only heir of Matthew Tupper, of whom perhaps you have heard."

The landlord did not seem the least impressed.

"I knew of him," he said, nodding. "He has been dead some time." Then he looked at the Picinino very hard. "Ye beant from the Highlands, be ye?" he asked, looking at us out of the corner of his eye and making a round O with his mouth, as though he had said something very smart.

"Why, no," I answered him. "What makes you think so?"

"About twenty year back, when I was younger and more foolish than I be naow, a passel o' young fellers come here with swords like that un and I give 'em bed and board, but they lit aout withaout settlin'. They didn't git very fur and I had 'em put in the stocks. They was Runaway Highlanders, they was, and I ain't never trusted a man from Scotland sence."

"You can put us in the stocks if we don't pay," the viscount broke in.

"That won't put any money in my pocket, that's been paid aout for yewr vittles."

"But I tell you that as soon as I see the solicitor or lawyer that handles my estate, I will have plenty of money. Don't you believe I am Mr. Tupper's nephew?"

"Yew may be, I don't know. Thar was a young sprout in here last week wanted credit fer a pipe o' wine. When I wouldn't give it to him, said he was Governor Shirley's son. I believed him. He didn't git no credit, though. I believe yew. Yew may be a rich man, but yew cain't git anything in this haouse without yew pay fer it in advance!"

"O, be —— to you then," said the viscount. "I'll come back here tomorrow and buy your old tavern and put you out into the street."

"Tain't for sale!" cried the landlord after us as we went out.

We stood helplessly in the street after this and the viscount chewed his fingers and cursed me.

"If it had not been for that doubly cursed sword again, we might have gotten supper and perhaps a bed."

"The sword had nothing to do with it," said I. "It was our own fault. Let's go back to the carter. Perhaps he'll let us sleep in the wagon."

So we went back to where we had left the carter, after some difficulty in finding the place, and found nothing save a number of carts and empty wagons. We crawled into one of these and covering ourselves with some old sacks, passed a very uncomfortable night, having had nothing to eat all day.

WITH the coming of dawn, our spirits rose again. This was the day that we had come all these weary miles to see, the day for which we had braved a debtors' prison, the traitor's rope, and the perils of the wintry ocean. We washed in a horse trough and did what we could to make each others apparel presentable.

The viscount examined his papers and scraped bits of the wax from them. They were now rather frayed and worn, with places here and there where the ink had run, but were still readable. They were all there, but he kept them in his hand for a moment, in their leathern case.

"I wish," said he, "that you would leave that —— sword behind, for it has brought us nothing but ill luck since the day we first met."

"Where would I leave it?" I asked him. "We may have to sell it to buy food."

"Little fear," he replied.

He stood a moment and then started off. According to the scroll of the will, the original was in the possession of one James Huckins, on Cornhill, and to this place we inquired our way.

When we had found the place there was no one there and we hung about the street for three or four hours, until a clerk came and took down the shutters. This one told us upon inquiry that Mr. Huckins did business up one pair of stairs and that he would not arrive until ten o'clock. This meant another weary wait and at last a little vinegar-countenanced man skipped out of a carriage and went up the stair.

"That is he," said the viscount. "We had best wait a while and then go in. Now," he continued, looking slyly at me, "there is a plan I think I should tell you of.

Do you not think the Honorable George Brockhurst should have his companion or secretary carry his papers for him, and wait without until summoned?"

"Why, yes," I agreed heartily. "That is just the thing. I will do it gladly."

The viscount, somewhat surprized that I did not object, handed me the leather case containing the scroll of the will and the scroll of the parish register, and the letter from the agent in London.

"Now when I call to you, you shall come in and present me the papers."

"I understand," said I.

Then the viscount went up the stair. I drew out the papers and examined them, especially the letter from the London agent, at the top of which was the Honorable George's signature, although it was the viscount who had written it there. The ink of this had run, so that it might be anything and I was much pleased at that fact.

"Maud," I said to myself, "for thy sake I am blackening my countenance and putting mine honor to blush, but I believe it is for the right." Then I slapped the hilt of the Picinino and strode off up the street. After a goodly time, I went back to the place where I had left the viscount and up the stair.

There was a small room within, cluttered with rolls of paper and great books. Behind a desk sat the vinegar-countenanced man, looking very bored, and opposite him the viscount, chewing his fingers and quite red and embarrassed.

"Why, here is the man now," he shouted as I came in. "Where have you been? Guzzling ale, I'll warrant! What do you mean by going off when I directed you to wait?"

I looked at him very coldly.

"I crave your pardon." said I, "but I have business with Mr. Huckins, if this be he, and I regret that I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance."

"Are you mad?" he shrieked. "Give me my papers!" I paid him no heed, but advancing to the desk, handed the papers to the lawyer.

"If you will have the goodness to examine these," said I, "you will see that I am the Honorable George Brockhurst, heir to the estate of Matthew Tupper, deceased, and as for this man here, I know nothing of him save that he is some poor demented wretch."

The lawyer examined the papers carefully. "I see that there is a place here for a signature, but the signature is unreadable. Hmm. Very strange indeed. Both of you lay claim to the estate, but it would seem that the one that hath the papers is the rightful heir. How is it that you appear in such disreputable fashion?"

"I was shipwrecked," I said.

"I have told all that," cried the viscount. "This man is an imposter. Why, he is my servant, —— him. I told you of him, did I not?"

"I think this gentleman here has the right of it," the other said, nodding to the viscount, "for he told me he had the papers and left them with his servant. Both of you may be lying, there is no way to tell."

He continued at some length, to my great discomfort, questioning us shrewdly, and our stories agreed perfectly, save that we both claimed to be the Honorable George.

"I believe it to be a case for wiser heads than mine," said the lawyer at last, "and if there were enough of an estate to pay the costs, I should turn it over to the courts. However, we will have in the legacy and mayhap we can come to some agreement."

He went into a closet, while the viscount and I looked at each other with slack jaws.

Then the lawyer returned, bringing with him a small wooden box, which he placed upon the desk and opened.

"You must know," said the lawyer, "that Mr. Tupper beggared himself to send whichever one of you is his nephew to the university, always hoping that his fortunes would mend. He did not intend to die as early as he did. Be that as it may, when the estate was settled and the debts satisfied, this is all that was left."

Then he opened the box and took out a silver box for snuff, a chain and a seal ring. This he put down on the table and added a pair of silver buckles, quite badly tarnished.

"Perhaps you can come to some agreement," said Mr. Huckins, "but I must remind you that I am a busy man."

A LONG, long time we stood, I feeling very foolish and shamed. I had thought to seize the estate myself, and then find Maud by hook or crook and tell her that it was hers if she would but come and take it. But there was no estate after all.

"Give my share to the poor, or throw

it out of the window," I said, and went down the stair.

"Now where?" cried a voice. I turned and there was the viscount at my shoulder. "No hard feelings," he said smiling. "We have lost and let us forget it. I intended to lay the blame on you; say that you were the viscount and that I was Hugh Bancroft, if anything went wrong and we were detected. It was for that reason I gave you the papers. So I hold it not against you that you tried to steal the estate. It would not have worked, you know," as we wandered off up the street. "We have been seen too much together and there would always be the chance that the captain of the *Gull*, who was taken into the French ship, would arrive and expose you."

"How are we to eat?" I inquired.

The viscount seized my arm in a grip of iron.

"Roast me in ——!" he whispered in awful tones. "Look!"

Just below us was a shop and at the hipping stone a gorgeous carriage. A lady stepped on the stone and so into the carriage, the two footmen leaped behind. Quickly the lady might come out of that shop, lightly she might step into her coach, but not so quickly and not so lightly but what I should know her. It was Maud Brockhurst.

"Sold!" cried the viscount, his lips white. "Sold! She has beaten us to the legacy after all! Back to that lying lawyer, back, I say, and we'll have the truth though we drag it from his lying throat!"

"Not so fast!" I said, "not so fast!" I went on to the shop, the viscount at my elbow and scraping after the coach.

"Who was that lady that just drove off?" I inquired.

The man turned with a smile that changed to a look of disdain when he saw our ragged clothes and bearded cheeks.

"Who are you?" he demanded.

"We are poor shipwrecked mariners," I informed him, "and the lady looks like a relative of mine."

"Ah," he said. "Why, she is the wife of my Lord Dudley. She were on her way from England, when the ship she were in were taken by the French. His majesty's ship *Lion* fell in with the French ship and she were rescued and brought here, very ill from seasickness. And so her case came to the notice of my Lord Dudley, and he fell in love with her and married her this day week?"

"Her husband was killed in Flanders, you say?"

"Aye, at Dettingen, and many's the tale she can tell of his battles! The Honorable George Brockhurst were his name and she expected to be taken into her husband's uncle's house, but he died a bankrupt a long time back and she had nowhere to go. Then he went into his shop and banged the door.

I looked at the viscount.

"And now?" I asked.

He chewed his fingers.

"I think I will call upon the Lady Maud," he muttered, not looking at me, but across the street. "After all she is an old schoolmate of mine and may have her husband find me a competence."

I chewed this in my mind and would have struck him, but I refrained.

"For a long while," said I, "I have wondered whether you were a very brave man or a very great scoundrel, and now I know you are neither, but a poor sop of a man that I would not soil my foot with kicking!"

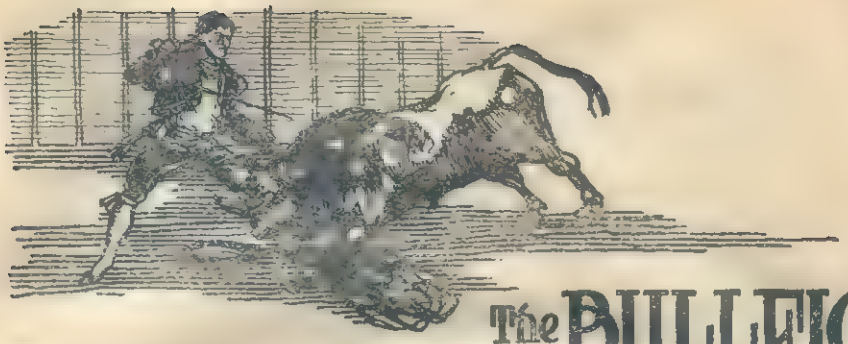
Then I turned my back upon him and went up the street at my best pace, clanking the Picinino on the stones. When I came to the turn I looked back. The viscount was going in the direction the coach had taken, limping slightly from the hurt he had gotten in the wreck.

So here was the end. No money, no estate, and no Maud. A husband who had died in Flanders, forsooth! Well, I still had a sword and knew a use to which it could be put. I turned down the next street and up and then down, and finally found my way back to the Bunch of Grapes. I found Sergeant Withington.

"Sergeant," I said, stepping over to the table. "Touching the matter of this venture to Canada. If there is still an opportunity to join, then here is a sword that is weary of being worn with civilian attire."

And I slammed the Picinino down on the table, so that the glasses rang.

THE END



W. The BULLFIGHT

by Percy Charles Chandler

Author of "The Cableman"

ON THE passenger list he was just W. Teague. A quiet young fellow, a cableman, and on his way to his first foreign station. He had a round pink-and-white baby face, and was still in his teens. A clean domestic odor of kitchen washing-soap and bread and butter persisted about his person despite the strong lift of the Biscayan breezes. He had a split projecting front tooth that pushed his upper lip out ever so slightly; and this peculiarity, when he opened his mouth to ask his naive, boyish questions, seemed to emphasize his innocence, his youthfulness, to an extraordinary degree.

As Wilberforce Teague surveyed the mighty gray lion-couchant of Gibraltar from the deck of the small Hall liner, his heart sank within him. A curious sinking feeling resulting from his first definite contact with the great outer world, the first realization of his own absolute non-importance before the broader vista of a different world as dimly comprehended in the swarthy upturned faces of the bumboatmen, the hubbub of strange tongues, the leonine rock and the low, green hills of Spain a long way off to the north and west across the scintillating blue of the bay.

Yet within a short six months Teague had grown as much at his ease as the most blasé of his fellow exiles on the rock. Wilberforce Teague was the son of a Yorkshire country parson; a kindly country parson, completely possessed with and surrounded by the proverbially large family.

Teague was a mild and unassuming young fellow, and his manners and education partook more of the parsonage than the college variety. The only occasion on which his mother had seen him really excited had been once when he took off his coat and bared his slim arms to fight a huge and hairy carter for brutally thrashing a horse in a country lane not a hundred miles from Kingston-upon-Hull.

The carter had jeered at the boy in his breezy Yorkshire way, and pushed him, not too brutally, in the mud. Whereat Mrs. Teague, good soul, had wiped the mud from her son's clothes; and mother and son had gone home to tea at the rectory, the son profoundly dejected at this crowning insult to his budding adolescence, and the mother's heart singing silent pæans of joy at these signs of incipient manhood in her boy, this sudden injection of romance into her quiet later days.

Teague loved all animals, especially horses and dogs. The mute nobility of horses appealed to him almost as much as the pally humanity of his Sealyham terrier.

And after six quiet months at "Gib" the Great Day arrived for Wilberforce Teague. The Great Day of his leap from comparative obscurity into Fame, into the controversy of two countries and the headlines of two continents. Any man less earnest and less honest of purpose would have turned back halfway. But not Teague.

That modest young man possessed a

curious consistency of character, a strange constitutional obstinacy, doubly strange in one of his seemingly plastic, easy-going nature. It was impossible for Teague to turn back once he had set his hand to the plow—or to his signature. The beginning of it was the bullfight at Linea, or to give that place its full name, Linea de la Concepcion; the town that has grown up on the old Spanish military lines of perpetual siege across the neutral territory from Gibraltar's North Front.

"On Sunday, September 15th, in the Plaza de Toros of Linea, the renowned *espada*, Rodrigo Robles (Robelito), assisted by his splendid *cuadrilla*, will kill six magnificent bulls of the insuperable herd of the Marques de Larios. Prices: One peso in the sun, two pesos in the shade."

So the bills read; and Teague reading them decided that he had better go and see a bull-fight. Just to be able to say that he had seen one. He went with Jones and Walker; the latter his particular chum. The glittering, bespangled matadors stride in to the lively strains of the Machaquito March; and Teague immediately feels himself in another world, in another age.

The President of the bull-ring, the *Alcalde* of Linea, tosses the keys of the ring down from his seat. A mounted *picador* catches them deftly in his cap and hands them to Robles, who strikes a theatrical attitude as he makes his small set speech. Then the military band breaks into the quickstep of the Spanish national anthem; the *cuadrilla* of the renowned Robles distribute themselves about the ring; and the crowd "*Olés*" perfunctorily.

They are bored with these formalities, and want to see the bull. Dead silence as the low wooden gates of the arena barrier swing inwards to make as lane to that other gate set in the stone of the ringside; a wooden gate set in an arched culvert of the stone; a gate that opens to let out the first bull, just as it will open six times that hot afternoon to let out the six superior bulls of the Marques de Larios one by one.

Let them out from dark blindness into the glare of the sanded arena, to be baited and tormented in the dazzling sunlight and through their agony, back to the glazing-eyed blindness of death again. The culvert gate closes, the barrier gate closes, the circle of the arena is made complete.

A HUM of excitement as the bull walks unsteadily into the light. Of a sudden the bull spies the red cape of a *capeador*. His head goes up as he canters toward the mark. Then down goes the head, the canter becomes a charge, the *capeador* runs and vaults easily over the barrier, the bull frisks playfully before the spot where the man disappeared, then turns to charge a new enemy. A hum of talk. The wine sellers and other itinerant vendors who ply their trade in the narrow space between stone ringside and wooden barrier raise their wares and their voices to the tiers of faces above them.

Teague and his friends buy three bottles of the cheap red wine. Teague is enthusiastic. All the glamor, the romance of Spain seems to enter into his genial soul with the noise, the sun, the colors and the wine. Ah! The preliminary cape play is over, and for the first time Teague notices the horses, backed against the barrier in a pitiful circle of six around the ring.

He cannot see a great deal of the horses for they are absurdly small animals, and the *picadors* who ride them, with their legs sheathed in stiff leather to the thighs, seem such big fellows by comparison. A *capeador* plays the bull nearer and ever nearer to one of the horses. This is Teague's first bull-fight.

Bull-fights are so common in that part of the world that nobody has troubled to explain to Teague just exactly what a bull-fight is. He had always imagined it to be some sort of a dodging business between the matadors and the bull. He grows intensely interested as the bull paws the ground a bare six paces from the horse.

Surely, now, there will be a pretty play! Poor Teague is due for a sad disillusionment. Why doesn't the *picador* loose the reins and canter his horse proudly away from the barrier and into the center of the ring where it will have ample room to maneuver? The *picador* raises his stout wooden lance. The point of the lance is blunted against piercing too deep into the bull's hide. Teague is breathing hard, and the perspiration rolls in big drops down his smooth, pink cheeks; he is most painfully engrossed in the spectacle before him. And the bull charges.

The lance slides harmlessly over its glossy back, its long, curved horns go down to the very ground. Its head is under the horse's belly. Then the tremendous head shoots

savagely up, so great the strength in that heaving neck that horse and rider are lifted in air clear off the ground. There must be some mistake here, thought Teague; this was surely an accident and not to be considered as part of the play. And he groaned dismally at the incredible thing he had seen.

The bull shakes its horns free, and the horse falls on its side. The *picador* falls to barrierward of his steed, leaving that sadly disembowelled object still between him and the wrathful bull. *Capeadors* run up boldly enticing the bull away to another part of the arena. Some assistants run in and lift up the fallen *picador*. He points at his horse, and an animated conversation ensues.

"They are arguing as to whether the horse is worth sewing up for another round," informs Jones, who has seen many bull-fights. One of the assistants kneels and appears to be conducting a minute examination of the horse's interior. The horse raises a pathetic head of terror-stricken eyes sideways from the sand. It seems to be mutely appealing to all those people against further prolongation of its agony.

All this time Teague is scarcely able to breathe, so great is the emotion within him. The kneeling man finally draws a short knife with which he puts the horse out of its misery by a stroke somewhere in the head. Teague's blood seems boiling with indignation. So obsessed has he been with the cruelty of the spectacle that he is spared the sight of precisely a similar thing happening on the distant side of the ring.

He has been warned against making any show of his feelings. He has been told that the Spaniards strongly resent any criticism of the national sport. If these hyper-critical and super-civilized *Ingleses* didn't care about bull-fights, then let them stay away from them! That was the Spanish point of view. It appeared that two horses would be sufficient for that bull. He had nasty horns, and even decrepit cab-horses are expensive when they can't be patched up again.

The *banderilleros* come up with their *banderillas*, wooden darts with barbed metal points and covered with gaudy paper streamers. The play is pretty. Something sporting about this! For the *banderillero* must play the bull into charging from close range directly at him; and, at the precise moment when the horns seem about to touch him, step lightly aside and plunge one, or if he can, both his darts into the bull's *cogote*, the hump behind the neck.

One of the men succeeds in placing both his darts in the charging bull, well and truly placed on top of the hump. A rare feat. The crowd "*Olés*" tremendously. They are now seeing something really artistic. Walker and Jones applaud loudly. Teague applauds less loudly; he appreciates the sporting aspect of the thing, but his thoughts are bitter with the recollection of a certain dying horse.

Ensues more *capeador* play. The bull now feels the strain of half an hour of uninterrupted chasing and charging. He paws the ground less proudly, and there are times when the red cape shoved into his very nostrils merely bores him into turning his shaggy head the other way.

Rodrigo Robles stands silently apart. He is the master *matador* of all Spain. He belongs to the rings of Madrid, Barcelona and Seville, but condescends to kill a few bulls at Linea and Algeciras during the winter, and at his own price. He makes a sign to one of the attendants, who immediately hands him a straight rapier-like sword.

Robles draws the blade and bends it in his hands. He approaches the *palco* of the *alcalde*, and removing his small cap, bows ostentatiously to that gentlemen and to the ladies seated to right and left of him. He raises his naked rapier high in air, and holding it thus paces rapidly around his side of the ring, bowing to the crowd shrieking down at him.

HE HAS a second who is probably as good a man with the bulls as he is; but Robles has decided to kill the first bull himself. He will allow his chief assistant the second one. This is the moment of his supreme glory. He walks like an athlete, and he is one. Through the tight silk stockings can be seen every muscle of the legs as he steps in short, springy jerks over the sandy arena. In his swaying stride is written all the glory and all the arrogance of Spain. His face is dark Andalusian; brown, inscrutable Moor and intelligent Latin blending in his slightly supercilious features.

When he smiles his white teeth flash against the contrast of his swarthy face; but he is not smiling now. He is about a serious business; and on the results of the next few

minutes the whispering crowd will be as ready to condemn in no uncertain condemnation as to hail him master *matador* of Spain. Robles throws his cap to an assistant. He arranges the glistening pigtail of his hair as carefully as any woman. He covers his sword with his red cape.

A *capeador* has played the tired bull dutifully to within ten paces of the master. Robles walks up to the animal and holds the cape before its nose. The shaggy head droops to the ground. The *matador* deliberately jerks the animal's head up with the cape-covered flat of his sword, and the bull makes a feeble protesting charge of about two yards. But its head comes up, and Robles has attained his object—to inject an appearance of action into these last few seconds of the play.

He stands directly before the bull, leaning slightly to the right, withdrawing the sword from the cape and extending the blade over the bull's head as though about to give it an accolade. But he is really judging the supreme moment. Ah! He has the spot—a fleshy spot over the left horn. He places the point of the blade tentatively over the spot; he rises on his toes; he extends his arm up, and the blade flashes down, down, down, its entire glittering length lost in the brown body of the victim. The bull has started at this sudden pang of lightning invading its vitals, but Robles has allowed for that. He steps lightly aside, withdrawing the red blade from the body as he does so; the stricken animal stumbles over its forelegs stupidly, slumps over on its side, and dies.

Within ten seconds it has ceased to breathe, and in another minute it is stiff, its sturdy legs sticking out before it. It is a perfect kill through the heart. Pandemonium breaks out among the audience. Scores of the straight-brimmed Spanish hats sail into the ring from all sides. Cigars, silver pieces, hats appear all over the sandy arena. The lesser members of the *cuadrilla* pocket the cigars and the money; the hats are returned whizzing unerringly through the air. Each hat appears to find its legitimate owner by means of some subtle and mysterious sign language not to be understood by gross Nordics.

There is an etiquette about all this. Robles struts unconcernedly around the ring. Only if the president or some other prominent man in the audience has thrown his hat into the ring, Robles has noted it, and he condescends to return that particular hat with his own hands.

An attendant runs in with a glass of iced wine. Another offers the great man a cigaret. Robles sips the wine, takes two puffs at the cigaret, and motions for the entry of the next bull.

So died six bulls and fifteen horses that sunny Andalusian Sunday. All the bulls were not so lucky as the first. For sometimes the sword misses the heart and enters the lungs, to be sent spinning back high in the air with a spurt of blood at the bull's next breath. And that, of course, must make dying very painful.

One of the bulls was so full of vim and so annoyed at one of the *banderillos* that he pursued that gentleman as he leapt the barrier, the bull projecting his tremendous weight of bone and brawn over the five-foot barrier after his tormentor. That, indeed, was a sight to see! For inside that barrier are always a host of people: *Guardia Civiles*, soldiers, policemen, itinerant vendors, lottery ticket sellers, and what not.

The *Guardia Civiles* are all picked men, reputed the bravest men in Spain. But they ran just as everybody else ran when bull number five leapt the barrier that day. They shouted, they panicked, they jammed in fighting-mad jams in the narrow passage way, they crawled and they vaulted into the arena. Some were not so quick as the others. Came a loud shout from somebody in the audience immediately above the bull of the leaping propensities.

"There is a man under the bull being gored to death!"

A gloomy chorus of wo from ten thousand throats. A wail of "*Ay's*," of "*Mi Madre's*"; a rustle of ten thousand standing up, of alarms and excursions and rushings to and fro. One toothless, leather-faced old muleteer, old enough to be the father of any person in that audience, did not wail or panic.

One grim-faced old man—and Rodrigo Robles. Robles and the old muleteer tumbled over the barrier together. There are about six places in the barrier where gates may be opened into the ring. A sign from Robles to an attendant and one of these gates is opened. The *matador* takes a firm hold of the bull's tail. But he is unable to move the animal from its horrible preoccupation of smashing its horns into something on the ground. Space is very

limited; so the old muleteer stands before the bull, a bare pace from the plunging head, and *speaks to it.*

The bull's head comes up, and the old man places his two hands under its mouth and exerts a gentle backward pressure. Robles tugs at its tail. The bull understands. They want him to back up. He backs; and the next moment is pulled and thrust through the gate and back into the arena. A man stands up from the ground.

He climbs to the top of the barrier to exhibit a miracle to the audience. The coat and shirt are torn from his back, a bare, white back without a scratch upon it! The bull's horns had plunged to right and left of his body, tearing every scrap of clothing from his back, but leaving him untouched. He is a soldier of the local garrison. He is trying to say something. The crowd ask each other—"What is he saying?" The soldier's words are passed around the ring with roars of laughter. The soldier is complaining that now he will have to explain to King Alfonso the meaning of this torn uniform.

The spirit of comedy enters into the audience. Some hundreds of *pesetas* are thrown into the ring. They are carefully gathered up and presented to Robles. That gentleman takes a bill from his own pocket and adds it to the sum. He runs over to the hysterically grinning soldier on the barrier, presenting him with more real money than that fortunate fellow would receive in pay in five years.

The two are shaking hands. The great Robles, the confidant of princes, and a common soldier. Tumultuous cheers! Tragedy, comedy, the lordly condescension of the people's hero—and so back to drama and, possibly, tragedy again. Spain, and the very essence of it: Hypocritical and mock-heroic, arrogant, cruel to the point of savagery; but with the saving grace of humor, the genius for generosity, and the manly virtues of high courage and the disdain of death—and life—through it all.

WILBERFORCE TEAGUE meditated long and deeply on bull-fighting in the silence of his room in Gibraltar that night. His mind was in a turmoil. Could such things be possible in a civilized world? It was not only the actual cruelty of the bull-ring that obsessed him, but the atmosphere of the whole thing; the blood, the wine, the glaring sun, the mute agony of the slaughtered horses, the cruel, dark faces of the men, the drunken orgies and blatant women in the little *cantinas* of Linea, glimpsed fleetingly on his homeward way.

The sum of the whole produced in him a feeling of depression unlike anything that he had ever felt in his life before. And so he pondered long into the night, until, his mind evidently made up on some definite point, he got up from his bed, and seating himself at a small writing table he began to write.

The "Gibraltar Chronicle," the semi-official two-page news sheet of the town, appeared the following afternoon as usual. In the middle column of the back page was an extraordinary announcement. So extraordinary, indeed, that the editor had seen fit to append a few words of his own to it.

"We have received the following announcement, with a request that it be inserted at our usual advertising rates. Much against our will we are therefore compelled to insert it, at the same time reserving the liberty of cautioning Mr. Teague against taking the steps he indicates. We would advise Mr. Teague against trying to reform the world; but most strongly do we advise him not to attempt reforming Spain, much as we admire the spirit that moves him."

This was followed by:

An open letter to Señor Rodrigo Robles.

My very courageous Sir:

The undersigned was a spectator of the bull-fight at Linea yesterday, his first bull-fight. While fully capable of admiring the better and more manly aspects of this sport, permit me to say that I consider the inclusion of broken-down, decrepit cab-horses in the ring, placed there for the obvious and only purpose of being gutted to a painful death, does not accord with the finer side of the play, and certainly not with Spanish chivalry as I have been led to understand it. On this Monday, September 16th, being in my right mind, and positively declining any reward or emolument, I challenge you to let me kill the last bull in the *corrida* advertised for next Sunday, September 22nd, permitting me to act as one of your *capeadors* for the killing of the first five bulls, in order to gather a little necessary experience, as it were. But with one condition: There must be *no horses* for this last bull if I am to kill it; my desire being to demonstrate that the inclusion of the horses is as unnecessary as it is cruel.

Yours very admiringly,
WILBERFORCE TEAGUE

c/o The Exiles Mess,
South Barrack Road, Gibraltar."

Teague was ragged unmercifully by his colleagues when they saw this. But he merely turned his smiling pink-and-white baby face to all their chaffing. On Tuesday

the Spanish language newspapers of Gibraltar, as well as the papers of Linea and Algeciras, appeared with a Spanish translation of Teague's challenge.

On Wednesday the announcement was copied in the Madrid dailies, and on Thursday every newspaper in Spain held the "insulting challenge of the *Ingles*"; every rag from Cadiz to Barcelona, and from Malaga to Vigo. Caricatures accompanied Teague's defiance in the Madrid papers. Caricatures of an alleged "typical Englishman": A lanky man with drooping mustaches and flowing side-whiskers, a top hat and a monocle, depicted in the act of stabbing a bull in the hind quarters with a phenomenally long sword.

Teague was on the noon to 7.00 p. m. duty. Every morning at six a. m. he donned his football shorts and took a run along the south road to its end in the cliffs before the Governor's Cottage. Then back again, past the lighthouse at Europa Point and down the long slope of the Europa Main Road into the Alameda. Then back along the Line Wall and up the grueling grade of Scud Hill, up and ever up, literally climbing a steep hill at a slow jog trot, up the long flight of stone steps, slowly, one at a time, in order not to strain his interior anatomy, and so back to a cold bath at the quarters and a rub-down with embrocation by the faithful Walker.

After duty in the evening he repaired to the slaughter house on the North Front. There some experts in the art of slaughtering cattle obligingly demonstrated to him the exact spot behind a bull's left horn where the *matador* places the point of his blade for the kill through the heart. Also, the proper angle of thrusting. On Thursday afternoon Mr. Hyatt, the superintendent, sent for Teague.

"What's all this I hear, Mr. Teague?" said he in the cold, distant voice that his men knew and dreaded. "Remember, the company expects its employees to behave like gentlemen. Now, don't let me hear any more about this bull-fighting rot."

Teague's heart sang with glee as he emerged from the presence. He had feared the extraction of a promise, but instead had not been required to say a single word. That same night Teague received a visitor. None less than Rodrigo Robles himself. Robles was all smiles.

"Splendid!" exclaimed he. "My own press-agent could have done no better. We shall fill the ring to overflowing. Of a surety you shall kill the last bull. Without horses, you say? Why, certainly, Mr. Teague. And you are sure you know just how to kill a bull?"

IT IS not necessary to dilate upon the further conversation of Wilberforce Teague and Rodrigo Robles. Suffice to say that newly printed posters on Friday told the world that Mr. Wilberforce Teague, an esteemed member of the British community of Gibraltar, overcome by the well-known sporting instincts of his race, and positively without pay or reward of any kind, would act as a *capeador* in the *cuadrilla* of the renowned Rodrigo Robles and would kill the last bull with his own hands.

Sunday came. With it came excursion trains from Bobadilla into Algeciras. So by the small steamers across the bay to Gibraltar, and from thence to Linea by cab came the crowd. Excited mobs from Seville, from Granada, from Malaga and even from far-off Madrid. All the country villages of southern Andalusia sent contingents

Tommy Atkins arrived in companies and half regiments, decked out in red parade uniforms and white pith helmets. Jack Tars and soldiers made long thin lines of red and blue against the Sunday-suit browns and blacks of an unprecedented audience of Spaniards.

The ring, which holds easily thirty thousand people, was filled to overflowing. A panic-stricken superintendent heard at the last moment that the under-the-legal-age Teague was bent on carrying through his challenge. The superintendent was morally responsible for Teague, both to the company and to that young man's parents. But it was too late.

Teague had gone early to Linea, and was even then decked out in the borrowed trappings of a *capeador*, only a shade less magnificent than the great Robles himself. The faithful Walker was allowed to attend him, which gave that gentleman the privilege of a place on the barrier, and the right of entry into the arena at such times as Teague should need him.

The band blared and the crowd yelled itself hoarse as the brilliant band of matadors marched into the ring; but there was an undercurrent of keen enmity toward the

foreigner who sought to bring the national sport of Spain into disrepute.

Teague took the first bull as it entered at a rush. He held his red cape out over his right arm low to the ground. The bull charged, and the cape was removed to the opposite point of the compass as Teague wheeled lightly about on his toes. Wheeled but never moved from the place of his stance.

The bull turned, and this time he came at the legs; the wheeling silk-stockinged legs had caught his eye. As the downward charging head seemed about to sweep those legs from under the man, the legs disappeared. They hopped most unaccountably over the left horn of the animal to a position so close to the charging mass that Teague was able to slap the huge body resoundingly as it flew past him. The concussion of the rushing air nearly blew Teague over.

A roar of approval from the immense throng. Even the most experienced *capeadors* do not stay so close to the bull for two consecutive charges. Robles beamed his pleasure. *Por todos los Santos*, but he would engage this cool-headed *Ingles* as a *capeador* on the strength of that play alone!

The bull felt the slap and turned in his stride. He evidently wished to see who had inflicted the insult of a slap on an insuperable bull of the Marques de Larios.

He wheeled and came at Teague at short range, the third charge in less than ten seconds. This sort of following-up, of charge after charge, has been known to rattle even the best *matadors*. That is why there are usually about six of those gentlemen; the idea being that they shall take it in turn to play the bull, giving each man time to collect himself before his turn comes round again.

This time the bull came with a plunge that almost unnerved Teague. Almost, but not quite. For the bull came at the cape. The cape was removed and the animal flew by so close to the man who had not even troubled to move his legs that he could smell the beast's breath coming hot off the sand.

Another *capeador* took the next charge, and Robles and his men came up to tender congratulations. But Teague had an object in taking more than his fair share of the *capeador* play.

He wished to take no part in the killing of the horses, and therefore would take more than his part in the other play, so that nobody should be able to accuse him of shirking or cowardice.

The first bull was killed in twenty minutes. The second and third took about half-an-hour each. Whenever the *capeadors* started to play the bull toward the horses, Teague left them. On these occasions he took up a position of solitary state near the barrier, conversing with Walker.

All sorts of remarks were flung at Teague out of the seething sea of faces above him.

"Hark at 'em," he said once to Walker. "Do you know what they are saying?" Walker knew, but shook his head. He knew more Spanish than Teague, but he feigned ignorance.

"Well," said Teague. "I know what they're saying. They're saying I am a sissy for not wanting to see the horses killed."

He smiled. They called him worse names still; for there are finer grades of sarcastic imprecation in the Spanish than in any other language under the sun. Words, frankly, that have no equivalent of translation even in the filthiest English. Teague's testing that afternoon was a mental test every bit as hard as the physical one.

Came bull number four. Twenty-five minutes for him. Then bull number five. And so to the last bull. It is ever the unexpected that happens. While the mule team made its long curves in the sand where the mules dragged out the dead bull and horses, a tremendous shouting broke out from a certain section of the audience.

"*Don Tancredo!*" they cried. "*Suerte de Don Tancredo!*"

The shouts were taken up by other sections of the crowd, and soon the whole ring rang with "*Don Tancredo!*" Moreover, it seemed they desired *el Ingles* to perform the feat.

Robles ran over to where Teague and Walker chatted by the barrier. He spoke a few hurried words to Walker, who interpreted to Teague. Teague understood. He informed Robles that he was ready for the *Don Tancredo* act, or anything else the audience demanded.

Many, many years ago in Spain lived a middle-aged gentleman named Don Tancredo. This gentleman was not a patron of the bull-ring; indeed it is said that bull-fights bored him. And one day, having heard his friends extolling a certain great

matador of those times to the skies, Don Tancredo rudely interrupted the talk to inform those friends that though lacking the wind to chase bulls around arenas on hot Sunday afternoons, and though getting on in years, nevertheless he, Tancredo, would face any bull, alone and unarmed in the center of the ring, and would continue facing that bull until the bull grew tired of looking at him, or, alternatively, until it killed him.

Tancredo's challenge was accepted. He bravely took up his station alone and unarmed in the center of the ring, where he stood on a small pedestal no higher than a footstool.

The bull after entering the ring charged straight up to the daring man, but Tancredo stood as still as any statue; and the animal after sniffing at his legs walked disdainfully away. Don Tancredo escaped with his life; and in bull-fights ever since that time the *Suerte de Don Tancredo*, the Luck of Don Tancredo, has been reenacted hundreds of times.

THE ASSISTANTS raked the sand into an even surface, and the ring was cleared. A *capeador* placed a low footstool in the exact center of the vast space, a circle that seemed unaccountably large to Teague now that the last man had left the ring. A bugle blew, the gate opened for the sixth time that afternoon, and the last bull came blindly forward into the sunlight.

He was a tremendous animal, a king among the bulls. His horns stood out a full foot on each side of his shaggy head and then curved wickedly up to the skies for another eighteen inches, ending in two rapier points.

A most unusual bull, for he kept his head high instead of smelling at the ground as most bulls do when entering the ring. A whisper went through the files of the audience; a whisper that shivered nervously along the sea of faces.

Men grew gloomy, and women counted their beads; for the Spaniard, with all his faults, does not like to have his afternoon's entertainment capped with the killing of a brave man. The whispering resolved into a murmur of words.

"Wot are they syeing?" queried a Tommy just out from Aldershot of the artilleryman at his left. The artilleryman had been at "Gib" many years. "They're sayin' he's a bad bull, sonny. A herd leader. That's why he keeps his head up. They're sayin' he's a bull what *looks* when he charges."

The Tommy ruminated on this information for a space. Then:

"It's a —— shime!" returned he hotly. "That's wot I sye; a —— shime! They done it a' purpose, the low-down murderin' blayguards! They kep' that bull back a' purpose ter murder this feller from the tellygrafs. I'd like ter start a murderin' some on 'em now."

"Stow that talk, Brown!" came the order from a sergeant. The Tommy was the possessor of a stentorian voice. He was also the possessor of an empty bottle which he held in his right hand, punctuating the indignation that consumed him by waving it about in the air.

" 'Ere mate, go slow with that bottle," protested the soldier on the right of the bottle waver. As he spoke the bull charged straight at Don Tancredo Teague. Teague tried to close his eyes, but found that he could not. A fearful fascination had kept his eyes glued to the brown mass of the bull from the moment in had entered the ring, for he stood facing the point of its entry.

Blinded by the sudden glare the animal had walked aimlessly about near the barrier for the interminable space of nearly one minute. During that appalling minute Teague had made one definite decision. He knew the bull must make its charge sooner or later, and he had decided that whatever happened he would stay standing where he was.

In order that there should be no doubt about accomplishing this he had resolved to close his eyes. He might die, but they should never be able to say that he had moved! A wonderful calm swept over him at this glorious thought. The honor of England, of the whole race, was in his hands and, dash it all—it was safe! Teague was a singularly clean-living, clean-speaking boy. He had never cursed in all his young life. A feeling of ineffable abandonment overcame him. And then when he saw the beginning of that charge; the bull's glaring eyes directed straight at him, followed by the flicker of the tail, the playful, almost skittish way it pranced about on its short, incredibly active legs as it took note of its objective, and finally the lowered head as the huge mass came straight at him—his eyes refused to close!

In that moment a Tommy with a voice like a drum arose from the place where he sat at a right angle to the direction of the charging bull. He threw an empty wine bottle with all his force at the bull, and he threw a terrible shout of defiance after the bottle. A general defy to all bulls, bullrings, Spaniards and Spain.

The bottle fell short, but rolled. It attracted the bull's eye, and the voice attracted his ears, so that he wheeled within six feet of Tancredo Teague to investigate this other presence in the ring. The bull sniffed at the bottle and then cantered up to the barrier whence that blast of a voice had come. Bull raised an inquiring head to the red-coated men above him. The Tommy stood up and harangued the bull. Comedy again entered into the audience.

Strictly speaking the Tommy should have been arrested and bundled ignominiously back to Gibraltar; but nobody seemed to notice the discrepancy.

"Ef yer touch a 'air of 'is 'ead," bellowed the Tommy to the bull, "I'll come dahn there and pluck the dirty 'eart aht of yer."

The Spaniards did not understand, but were quick to see the humor of the situation. In fact, they roared with laughter. One would have thought they understood every single word, as indeed they did gather the meaning.

"Yuss, I'll come an' jolt yer with me bagginet, yer dirty dog."

He produced the bayonet and drew the short blade, glaring about him to see if any Spaniard in all that crowd would be willing to gainsay him; but the crowd was consumed with waves of mirth.

"Sit down and shut up there, Brown!" came the cold voice of the sergeant.

Private Brown sat down; but he had accomplished more than his wine-fuddled senses knew. The bull turned his head along the line of the red-coats. Had anybody there anything more to say? No? He wheeled suddenly, flicked his short tail contemptuously in the face of the British army, and cantered lightly back to Don Tancredo. If you have not seen seven or eight hundred pounds of bone and brawn "canter lightly," then you have not seen the Andalusian bull in action.

The bull drew up before Teague, advanced two paces, and sniffed carefully at his stockinged legs. Then he walked around those legs, legs as still as stone, and sniffed at the backs of the calves. This was the supreme test of nerve. To see what sniffs before you is bad enough, but to *feel* that sniff behind you when you can not see, when you must not move a limb—that is the very culmination of the limit! For a bull is just as likely to charge from the back as from the front. And though Teague could not see, a breathless audience saw the bull walk slowly away.

Arose a tremendous shout. "*Basta!* Enough!" Robles decided that it was enough, and gave a sign. His men sprang over the barrier. Don Tancredo's luck was in. A *capeador* had to pinch Teague in the legs in order to induce movement in those limbs.

AND the baiting of the last bull began, without horses, as per agreement. It was a great fight. The bull was remarkably strong. He refused to stop chasing the *capeadors*. In one brief moment of bovine glory he had everybody in the ring, including the renowned Robles, over the barrier or squeezed in the little refuges around the ring; the little wooden refuges built against the barrier where a thin man may squeeze himself, but where the bull can not enter.

Teague approached Robles as his fellow *capeadors* made miraculous jumpings and escapes from the now infuriated bull in another part of the arena.

"*Banderillas*," said Teague, pointing to himself.

The *capeadors* were getting very tired playing the restive bull all the time without the diversion usually provided by the horses, and Teague desired to take the bull himself for a few minutes to help them out.

"Mind," warned Robles. "This one has wide horns."

It appeared that every bull had some peculiarity. This one had wide horns; very well, Teague would watch them. He played the bull with his cape for seven consecutive charges; the animal was plunging too much for the *banderilla* play. The bull must be brought to a temporary standstill before the placing of the darts can be attempted.

The audience applauded tremendously at the spectacle of one man taking the bull for such a prolonged period. Such a thing was unknown in the etiquette of the ring; but the tired *capeadors* needed a rest and were not worrying about etiquette just then.

Teague was getting his second wind. The long running exercise of the previous week now began to tell. His legs felt most astonishingly lithe and strong beneath him.

The audience went crazy; this was real sport—one man wearing a strong bull down by his own unaided efforts!

And that was precisely the idea Teague wished to convey—that horses were unnecessary, and that the men should wear the bull down by their own efforts. The bull was standing still now. Then he started charging again; a series of charges, pullings-up, wheelings and charges again. Not once did Teague take the shelter of the barrier, although the crowd freely invited him to do so. He pretended to run for the barrier, turned in his stride, and let the bull chase him for half the circumference of the ring.

Such a thing was unheard of in all the annals of bull-fighting! For almost any bull can catch the fastest runner, and here was a running man giving the bull a chance to do it! But Teague ran faster than the bull. And finally the animal gave it up. He refused to chase Teague any longer. Teague flung his cape to an assistant. He took two *banderillas*, and, drawing himself up to his full height, paced toward the panting bull.

He extended his arms above his head, a *banderilla* in each hand. He walked to within seven paces of the bull, and stopped. The bull had had a slight rest, and decided that another charge wouldn't do him any harm. He charged. It seemed the horns were about to close on the motionless body of the man when, as in one movement, hands came sharply down, legs hopped lightly aside—and the bull went flying past trying to shake off the two darts shivering in the huge hump of his back.

The crowd yelled its approval of the perfect *banderilla* play. Robles' second came forward to place a pair of darts. He succeeded in placing one. The crowd groaned. *Capeadors* came up to take the bull for a space. Forty minutes had passed since the bull came into the ring, not counting six minutes of the Tancredo prologue. Robles spoke to Teague.

"The people are clamoring for the death of the bull," said he.

"I will kill him now; give me the sword," replied Teague.

"Be careful," warned Robles. "He will charge when you least expect it in his present state; he is far from worn out."

But Teague insisted.

"Give me the sword," said he. "I will tire him thoroughly myself, and then kill him."

Shrugging his shoulders, Robles walked away. The kill is the supreme test of the master matador. And as all the swordsman's attention must of necessity be concentrated on the correct thrusting of his sword, there is always the second or two when he must take his eyes off the bull's forelegs; it is only in the tensing of the forelegs that the imminence of a charge may be detected. Teague had rested. He now took the play of the *capeadors*, and played the bull to a complete standstill.

Throwing his cap on the ground as he had seen Robles do the previous Sunday, he signaled for the sword. Raising the naked blade high in the air, he bowed stiffly to all four quarters of the ring. A better actor than Teague would have seized this moment for a little acting; for a series of exaggerated facetious bowings to the crowd.

If not much of an actor, Teague was a very brave young man. For, in order to bow to the fourth side of the ring he turned his back to the bull. The whole essence of the bull-fighter's "safety first" is to keep his face to the bull. It takes nerve to turn the back on the bull, even for a second.

Teague was standing a bare five yards from the bull when he bowed to that fourth point of the compass; and he turned his back on the awful curved horns for nearly ten seconds. The Spaniard notes these things spontaneously; and a loud roar of applause went up. This disdain of the bull appeals intensely to the crowd.

And even as the roar went up into the blue sky, so it ended as suddenly in a babel of excited shoutings and cries of warning. For the bull had chosen this moment to charge. His angry eyes looking straight before him had caught the inviting aspect of something definite to vent his fury on; the fury that had kept him chasing flying feet and red capes for the best part of forty minutes.

And he saw a gaudy pair of matador's pants as their owner bowed stiffly to the opposite side of the ring. A nice, cushion-like object to charge at. Something definite to hit after all this chasing of disappearing objects.

Teague felt a concussion as though he had been struck by a speeding automobile. Most unaccountably he found himself revolving rapidly up in the air. He hit the

sand with a thud. Fortunately the bull had charged for the purely bovine purpose of tossing. But Robles had been watching; and as the bull wheeled to sniff at the discomfited Teague, the matador laid on its tail with all his power. *Capeadors* rushed up to assist him in this tug-of-war.

The bull turned savagely on this new interruption. Teague got up slowly, picking up his sword and cape from the sand. He stretched his limbs and rubbed himself at the point of contact with the bull, and it appeared that no bones were broken.

A roar of laughter swept the audience; a very friendly mirth, interspersed with ribald remarks pertaining to the human anatomy, from long lines of cheering Tommies. The generous Robles spoke to Teague.

Surely the señor felt unnerved after his terrible experience? He, Robles, would kill the bull. Teague insisted that he, Teague, would settle with the bull. Once more he advanced on the animal. The bull was now thoroughly exhausted. The noble head hung down, the slavering mouth almost touching the sand. There was no luster in the once fierce eyes.

Teague felt a surge of pity sweep over him. The herd leader had fought a brave fight. Why not, then, let him go? All he wanted was to lay down in some dewy pasture and rest; in the morning he would be leading his herd again, as good a bull as ever.

"*A matar!* Kill him," roared the crowd. Teague knew that if he did not kill the bull somebody else would very quickly do so. He felt no fear as he advanced to within a yard of the lowered head. No fear; only aversion. Then by all that was just and fair he would kill this brave beast properly! There should be no further prolongation of the agony. No missing of the mark, no false thrust through the lungs. And the astonished audience saw the slight figure of the man with the sword walk up to the very nostrils of the bull. Robles swore an oath of admiration beneath his breath. *Caray!* —but this was a man! Teague placed the point of the sword over the correct spot.

He stood high on his toes over his victim; and with a prayer in his heart that the thrust might be straight and true, and with his whole attention on the correct angle of the kill, forty degrees from over the left horn to the heart, he thrust with all his might. The bull started forward as the blade passed through its mighty heart; shivered and lurched; and Teague, who had not moved, placed his left hand almost caressingly on the top of the shaggy head.

"It's all right, old chap, that's the last of all your troubles," he found himself muttering.

He felt more bitter against the whole business of bull-fighting in that moment than he had ever felt before. He drew the sword from the shuddering body and walked slowly away. When he looked back the bull was stiff on its side.

"Thank God!" he breathed. Robles and his men ran up to offer congratulations, but Teague was only able to offer a limp, unresponsive hand to their warm handclasps. The crowd was in a frenzy. Such a kill had never been seen before.

The best matadors usually effect their kills under a tremendous strain of tense, repressed excitement; but here was a man who placed himself between the very horns of the bull and languidly fondled the animal as he slew it! Teague was only able to return a diffident bow to the hoarse clamorings of the audience and he and Walker made a quick retreat to the dressing-room of the *capeadors*.

A THOROUGHLY flabbergasted superintendent had Mr. Wilberforce Teague on the mat early the following morning.

"There is a man due for furlough in Aden," said the superintendent. "And I have decided to send you to relieve him. You will sail on tomorrow's P & O boat. That is all, Mr. Teague."

Suez, Aden, Mombasa, Zanzibar, Durban—it was all the same to Teague. Any of the Company's stations was good enough for him; anything to escape the memory of that hectic Sunday afternoon in Linea.

But if you ever go to Linea—and watch your wallet when you go, it is a rough town—and put the question, you will find a score of men ready to enlighten you on the way Teague fought the bulls that Sunday afternoon. Especially the last bull, with many exaggerations and a lot of local color thrown in, after the Spanish fashion.

It is a pity Teague failed to reform bull-fighting. They still use horses in the ring. But it is a dying sport. The latest reports from Spain would indicate that Association football is rapidly displacing the *Plaza de Toros* and the *corrida* as a popular holiday diversion.

THREE KEGS OF SPECIE

A Complete Novelette

By John Webb

Author of "Observation," "On the Cards," etc.

IT WAS two o'clock in the afternoon. The intermediate passenger liner *Penguin*, now in her New York dock, was to sail for Cristobal, via Port-au-Prince, at three. Captain John McGuire, a lean, lithe, tanned little man, stood on the saloon deck. For years "Captain Mac," as he was called, had been master of the *Hawk*, of the same line, but, the worn old freighter being laid up for repairs, he had volunteered to relieve the *Penguin's* commander, who had requested six months' leave of absence. The little captain was leaning upon the rail, casually watching longshoreman transfer three small kegs from the pier to the ship.

An armored motor-truck had backed up to the skids that bridge the gap between the pier and a large, square port in the ship's side. Armed and watchful men stood on the pier by the skids, and other armed men were stationed on the ship's main deck at several points between the skids and the strong-room. A longshoreman had come up with a hand-truck; the first keg was tilted upon the truck and the man propelled it down the skids to the ship's main deck port passageway, along this fore-and-aft passageway to another that ran athwartship, where the longshoreman paused and peered closely at the deck ahead.

"How 'bout that bunker plate ahead there?" he asked. "Is it on tight?"

One of the armed guards tested the brass coal-bunker plate in the deck with his foot.

"All right, buddy. Come on," he said.

The truck went ahead, clanged over the bunker plate, and halted before the specie-locker. Here stood Sam Heidleman, the ship's purser. He copied into a note-book the markings on the keg, then waved the longshoreman to trundle it into the locker, which was a small iron-walled room with a massive iron door. The keg was tilted from the truck and the longshoreman went back to the pier for another. The second and third kegs were likewise brought aboard the *Penguin*, checked, and placed in the strong-room. The purser closed the iron door, placed a hinged iron bar, or hasp, across it, and secured the bar with a padlock; then he signed a receipt and gave it to the guard who had been responsible for the kegs till their delivery aboard ship.

"That's that. A pleasant voyage to you, Purser," said the guard, and made his way ashore.

Purser Heidleman climbed a ladder to the saloon deck, where he found the captain still leaning upon the rail.

"Specie's aboard, Cap'n," said the purser.

Captain Mac nodded.

A passenger was leaning on the rail some ten feet aft of the captain. The passenger was a big black-browed man with sharp, stabbing black eyes and a harsh mouth. He had been watching the loading of the three kegs. Now he straightened, turned slowly, stared boldly at Captain Mac, then at the purser.

"Find your quarters satisfactory, Mr. Taber?" inquired the purser pleasantly.

The black-browed man grunted something that sounded like "hr-rumph!" swung

slowly on his heel, and marched off down the deck.

"Who is that fellow?"asked the captain, looking after the man.

"Name on the passenger-list is Taber—Nelson Taber; that's all I know about him, sir, except that he's a through passenger to Cristobal. He reminds me of a bulldog."

"He's got that air," agreed the captain. "He seems the kind of man who would hang on to a thing once he clamped his teeth on it."

"That's the way he strikes me, too."

"About the specie—what have we this time?"

"Gold coin, sir. Three kegs of it, three-quarters of a million dollars *oro Americana* in all."

"Panamanian gold Balboas, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir. From the Philadelphia mint."

"Well, have your assistant stand by the locker till we leave the pier."

"He's there, sir."

"That's right. Tell the second mate to make an entry in the logbook: '2.15—specie aboard.' "

"I'll tell him, sir."

The purser went forward and Captain Mac went down the passenger gangway to the pier. There he met Mr. Barnes, the chief engineer.

"Never knew it to fail!" complained the chief. "Never! Why is it that coal-heavers have to get drunk on sailing day? Why do they have to pick that particular day? Here it is, within an hour of sailing, and I'm three men shy!"

"That's the way it happens," said Captain Mac. "Read this. I got it half an hour ago."

The chief took the telegram that the captain handed him. It read:

Can not sail in *Penguin*. Am sending substitute mate. Hope he will do. Put my clothes on pier please. WILLIAMS

"That's from the man who was chief mate in this ship," exclaimed Captain Mac. "He went ashore this morning to say good-by to his people. He hadn't signed on when he left. I suppose he found a better job."

"Did you take the mate he sent you in his place?"

"Yes; there was no reason why I shouldn't take him. He looks like a good man. Shattuck's his name."

"Shattuck? H'mm. Don't think I know 'im. Well, I have to scout around for some coal-heavers, Cap'n."

Grumbling and shaking his head, the chief went toward the street.

In a few minutes he returned, grinning, and after him trailed three tough looking men carrying straw-covered suit cases and canvas sea-bags.

"I was lucky," he shouted to Captain Mac. "I picked up three pierhead jumpers right outside the pier." And to his men, "Come on, boys, get aboard and sign on. You'll find the commissioner waiting for you in the messroom."

He herded them up the crew's gangway and into the ship.

THE big pier was crowded with longshoremen, porters, baggage men, passengers and friends of passengers. Trunks were being carried aboard over the after skids and lowered into the hold; hand baggage was being carried up the passenger gangway by sweating porters. The rails on this side of the ship were lined with excited people and there was a press about the upper end of the gangway.

Captain Mac, on the pier, looked at his watch. Then he made a motion to the third mate, who was watching him from the wing of the ship's bridge. The third mate disappeared, and a moment later the passengers were startled by the roar of the warning whistle. Three times the whistle sounded, and as the last blast died a white-coated porter began to go the rounds of the decks, crying, "All ashore that's goin' ashore! Friends ashore, please!" The pilot was on the bridge and a man with a white and a red flag was standing on the end of the pier. A single fall had been made fast to the upper end of the gangway and longshoremen stood on the pier in readiness to haul the gangway away from the ship when the word should be given. The crew's gangway had been put upon the pier and longshoremen were unrigging the cargo skids and nets.

A taxicab suddenly rolled out upon the pier with a great honking of its horn. It had not yet come to a full stop when its door flew open and out popped a plump, blond, red-cheeked little man whose clothes were all awry and whose soft velour hat was crumpled down over one ear.

"Hy! Wait a minute!" he cried excitedly. "Here I am! Wait a minute!"

Several porters ran to the plump man's assistance. They took a trunk from the running board of the taxi and two suitcases from within, and started aboard with them. The little man paid the taxi driver, showed his tickets to the assistant passenger agent on the pier, and followed his baggage up the gangway.

"Whew!" he puffed, smiling to the passengers grouped on the gangway. "Almost missed it! Gosh! That would never do! I been waitin' twenty years for this trip."

Captain Mac came aboard, made his way to the bridge and nodded "All right" to the pilot. The gangway was lowered to the pier. The third mate, at a word from the pilot, put the engine-room telegraph on half speed astern. A bell jangled far below and a moment later the twin propellers threshed the water. The vessel began to gather stern-way, and the whistle shrieked its "coming-out-of-slip" warning. The *Penguin* backed out into the busy East River, was swung and pointed, and began to work its way down-stream through the traffic.

"Look there, Cap'n," said the pilot, pointing forward over the canvas weather-cloth.

In the ship's bows, leaning so far over the rail that it seemed a miracle he did not lose his balance, was the plump little man who had nearly missed the sailing. He was interestedly watching the vessel's stem slicing the dirty river water. Nearby stood Mr. Shattuck, the chief officer, at his station by the anchors till the ship should pass beyond the Narrows. He seemed to be talking to the plump passenger. Perhaps he was cautioning him not to lean too far over the rail.

The pilot chuckled.

"Recognize the type, Cap'n Mac? A little two-by-four business man taking a vacation—or maybe he's just retired. First time he's ever been away from home. He's probably shipped the wife and kids off to stay with some relative. This is to be his one big adventure. I'll bet you a box of good cigars that I've sized him up to a T. How about it? Settle the bet when you return from this voyage."

"You ought to give odds," protested Captain Mac. I might just as well hand you the cigars and have it over with. But I'll call it a bet, just to show I'm a sport, Cap'n Parks."

"That's the stuff! If there were more sports like you, Cap'n Mac, I'd never have to buy any smokes."

AT EIGHT bells that night the chief mate made his nightly report to Cyptain Mac on the bridge.

"All's well about the decks, sir."

The captain nodded.

"I found a passenger, a big sour looking guy—Taber, I think his name is—hanging around the main deck by the specie-locker," added Mr. Shattuck. "I told him no passengers were allowed on that deck."

"What did he say?"

"He said, 'Hr-rumph!', and turned his back on me and went above. He's a grouchy bird, that one."

"He seems to be," agreed the captain. "I've noticed him."

The mate said good night and went toward his room.

Captain Mac stepped to the bridge rail, rested his arms and chin upon the upper edge of the weather-cloth, and gazed down upon the deck below, the promenade deck. There was no moon and the deck was dark and shadowy, lighted dimly here and there by the standing deck-lights. The air was cool. Few passengers were about the decks, though now and then a couple, arm in arm, passed under the bridge and around the wheelhouse, stamping in the manner of landsmen aboard ship. In the social hall a waiters' orchestra was making a sort of music.

Two men had halted by a deck-light just abaft the bridge. They had their heads together and were talking earnestly and in low voices. The third mate, whose watch it was, came up beside the captain, put his head over the dodger, and looked down at the two men. He snickered contemptuously.

"You know those two, don't you, Cap'n?" he said.

The captain looked hard at the two men for some seconds.

"I think I've seen them about the pier," he said at last. "They're company detectives, aren't they?"

"They *think* they're detectives. That chunky one is Kelly, the head 'detective.' He thinks he's the real thing because he wears a derby hat and pancake shoes, and because he catches a longshoreman stealing a couple o' pair o' socks or a can o' sardines out of the cargo. The other one, Donohue, is worse than Kelly. He's a 'detective' part of the time and cargo-checker the rest."

"Well, I guess they do their best."

"Oh, yes, I guess they do their best, Cap'n; and they're harmless. They mean well. They're aboard here because of that shipment of gold specie. They've been telling the other passengers that they're wealthy mining men going to look over their mines in Colombia. Don't they look the part?"

Captain Mac smiled.

A man came along the promenade deck from aft, and as he came within range of a deck-light Captain Mac saw that it was Taber, the surly passenger. Taber brushed by the two company detectives and was about to pass on when Kelly, the chunky one, reached out and clutched him by the arm.

"Say, Taber, I wanta talk to you—" began Kelly.

Taber turned slowly, his gaze fastened upon the hand that held his coat sleeve. Kelly released his grip and stepped back. Taber's eyes glittered in the faint light, and his swarthy face slowly twisted into a mask of fury.

"Listen, you," he snarled, "stay away from me. You and your partner. Don't come near me! Don't look at me! Don't think of me! If you speak to me again I'll chuck the pair of you over the side. I know what I'm after, and I'm going to get it! I always get what I go after. Get wise to yourself while your health is good. Do you understand?"

He reached out, clutched Kelly and Donohue by their coats, and dragged them to him.

"But I know somethin'—" began Kelly, trying vainly to release himself.

"Keep it to yourself! You're two brainless fools, and if you don't keep your tongues between your teeth, somebody's going to cut your ears off. You don't know what you're up against. This time they gave you a job that's too big for you. If you'll take my advice, you'll make a nice little pleasure trip out of this, and get back to your job of pinching bohunk longshoremen as quick as you can. Whatever you do, don't interfere with *me!* If you get in my way, or attempt to block my plans, so help me, I'll break you in pieces!"

He shoved the two detectives from him and marched off.

"Aw, go to ——!" growled Kelly, when the big man was beyond hearing.

TABER halted by the rail just forward of the bridge. He stood with his hands behind his back, his soft black hat pulled low over his eyes, looking out over the inky water.

"Tough egg, whoever he is," commented the third mate to Captain Mac. "He sure took the wind out of Kelly and Donohue. Wonder what he meant by all that?"

"I don't know what he meant," answered Captain Mac, "but what he said is worth making a mental note of."

Around the front of the wheelhouse came the plump, blond man who had nearly missed the ship. His hands in his pockets and a big cigar in his mouth, he halted beside Taber and looked up at him.

"I've been all over the boat and I think I've made myself known to everybody but you. I believe in being friends with everybody, don't you?"

"Hr-rumph!" answered Taber, folding his arms across his chest and turning half-away from the talkative one.

"Of course. I have a card here, but you couldn't read it in the dark. My name is Dumphries, George W. If you ever lived in Brooklyn, you've seen my ad—'Brooklyn's Best Butcher.' That's me. I've been a butcher for twenty-five years. I started with a string of frankfurters and now I've got a string of stores. Ha-ha!"

Dumphries' every word carried to Captain Mac and young Mr. Carlsen, the third mate. Indeed, so high-pitched and carrying was the cheerful butcher's voice, they could not have shut their ears to it had they tried.

"You lose, Cap'n; or rather, the pilot wins. You'll have to look him up and give him a box of cigars when we get back to New York. Now watch Taber squelch 'Brooklyn's Best Butcher'," said Carlsen.

But Taber did not try to squelch the butcher. Instead, he suddenly seized the other's hand and shook it heartily. He accepted a cigar and a light, and teetered contentedly on his heels while George W. Dumphries rambled on with his cheerful monologue.

"I always promised myself this trip. I retired a month ago, and last week I sent the old lady and the children to her sister's in Pennsylvania. I want to see a bit of life while I'm still—well, middle-aged. I want to taste that Barbancourt rum they make in Haiti and drink some absinthe in Panama.

And maybe I'll kind o' look the girls over in Colon—I'm not so old. Eh?"

He nudged Taber with his elbow and the surly man surprized the watchers above by throwing back his head and loosing a laugh. It was a peculiar laugh and an unpleasant one. It started slowly and low, with a sort of rasping grunt, gathered volume till it became a roar, a hollow, mirthless roar, then ended abruptly. It was the kind of laugh a lion might give as it gathered itself to leap upon its fear-stricken prey.

But there was no trace of fear in the merry lilt of plump little Dumphries' laugh. It rippled on long after Taber's fearsome roar had been carried off by the breeze.

"Let's go to the smoking room and see if we can't start a little game," suggested Dumphries. "Small stakes, just enough to make it interesting; or if you feel reckless, we'll make it something worthwhile, say fifty-cent limit." And he added as if at an after-thought, "The old lady'd give me the very dickens if she knew!"

Arm in arm, they went off, the big snarly man and the cheerful little one.

AT MIDNIGHT Captain Mac went to his room, closed the door and was preparing to turn in when there came a sharp knock and an excited voice cried:

"Hey, Cap'n! Open up!"

"Come in," answered Captain Mac.

The door flew open and Donohue, the taller of the two detectives, put in his head. He was plainly in a mental flurry and was with difficulty maintaining a semblance of professional calm.

"Come quick, Cap'n. We're going to make a pinch. Oh, I forgot—maybe you don't know who I am. Me and Kelly are company detectives. The company sent us aboard to look out that nobody got away with that gold specie. Kelly's got an eye on a suspect already. He's a slick one, Kelly is. He knows this guy. We're gonna pinch 'im."

"Merely on suspicion?" inquired the captain. "You can't do that. I won't allow it. We have to be careful, or the company would be swamped by lawsuits."

"Oh, don't you worry about this, Cap'n. We ain't takin' no chances. Kelly's got the goods on this guy. I don't know all he's got—Kelly ain't the kind o' fellow to tell his business to everybody—but you can bet he's got enough dope to make a pinch. Besides, we gotta take the bull by the horns. Ain't no sense in waitin' till this guy gets away with all that specie."

"I don't think we need worry about that. He isn't likely to break down the door of the specie-locker, steal over a ton of gold; and hide it in a secret compartment of his suitcase. How many times have you heard of a ship being robbed of its specie?"

Captain Mac put on his uniform coat and cap and prepared to follow Donohue.

"We-ell, I guess I ain't never heard of it at all," admitted the detective. "But this guy's one of these here super-criminals. Kelly was tellin' me about him."

"Who is the man?"

"Kelly give me orders not to say. He don't want it to get around yet. You see, we was sittin' in our room a while ago, Kelly and me, and the room-steward comes to the door and asks us did we want anything. Kelly made up his mind just like that—snap—and told the steward to go get this guy and tell him we wanted to see him on important business. And then he sends me to get you, to make it legal. You see, Kelly figures that we'll get this guy in the room between us and force a confession out of 'im. Third degree stuff. D'you get the idea?"

"I think you're way off your course," answered the captain, following Donohue from the room.

"Just the same, if you give us permission, Cap'n, we'll either get a confession or knock this guy's block off."

Captain Mac, as they stepped out upon the unlighted bridge deck, collided with some one in the darkness, and a gruff voice, said:

"What's up, Cap'n? I heard the loud talking and thought maybe you were having trouble with one of the sailors."

"Oh, it's you, is it, Mr. Shattuck —" began Captain Mac, but Donohue, full of enthusiasm and excitement, cut in:

"Suspected criminal aboard, mate. We're gonna make a pinch."

"Oh!" said the chief mate, an uncertain note in his voice. "Er—perhaps I had better go along with you."

The three descended to the promenade deck, walked aft, rounded the smoking room and were about to start down to the saloon deck when the captain, happening to glance into the smoking room through an open window, paused.

There was a card game still in progress at a table in one corner. Facing Captain Mac were Taber and the little retired butcher. Three other men were facing in the other direction. Dumphries was grumbling and fretting about his cards, but Taber, who had before him several high stacks of chips, seemed to be in what was for him a good humor, for on his swarthy face was an expression that approached near to a smile.

"Such luck!" came Dumphries' high-pitched voice. "I haven't had a decent hand in the four hours I've been sitting here."

Taber glanced up. His gaze traveled out the window and came to rest upon the party standing in the glow from the smoking room. He sat up straight, and the near-smile left his face as he looked from Captain Mac to Shattuck, then to Donohue.

"I have to go below," he said, rising suddenly. "Count my chips and give me the money later. I'm in a hurry. Just thought of something."

Donohue, a puzzled look on his face, was rubbing one cheek thoughtfully.

"Well, let's go below to Kelly," he said. But he didn't seem in the hurry he had been in before seeing the party in the smoking room.

They descended to the deck below and entered the saloon-deck passenger quarters.

The stateroom occupied by Kelly and Donohue, No. 37, on the starboard side of the ship, was called an outside room because its window looked out upon the open deck, but its door opened upon an inside corridor that ran lengthwise along the vessel. As the party entered the corridor from one end, they saw two men coming along beneath the dim night-lights from the other end, and as the two came near they proved to be Taber and Dumphries, who had evidently gone forward and come below through the social hall and dining saloon. The five men came together just outside No. 37. Taber, with not the slightest hesitation, halted and openly watched Donohue as he tried the door.

"Huh! The door's locked," muttered the detective.

He rapped on the door with his knuckles. No answer.

"That's funny," said Donohue, knocking again, this time louder. Then he called, "Hey, Kelly! Open up. It's me, Donohue."

"He must be asleep," said Shattuck, when again there was no answer.

"The light's lit," remarked Captain Mac, pointing to the glare that came through the scroll-work high up in the partition.

DONOHUE stepped back to look at the light, and as he did so he saw for the first time that Taber and Dumphries had stopped and were watching him. He seemed bewildered and embarrassed, and his mouth hung open with doubt.

"I don't get this," he muttered, shaking his head.

"You don't get what?" asked Captain Mac.

"I don't understand—well, somethin' got twisted, that's all."

He thumped on the door with his fist, but there came no answer.

Taber stepped forward, brushed Donohue aside, bent and looked through the keyhole.

"Something is wrong, Cap'n," he growled to Captain Mac.

"Mister Shattuck," said the captain, "find the saloon watchman and get his pass-key."

The mate left, and in a few minutes returned with the key. He unlocked the door and threw it wide. Captain Mac entered first, then came Taber and the others, Shattuck last.

"Careful!" warned the captain. "Don't step in that."

He indicated a dark pool on the floor, then pointed across the room to something lying half on the floor and half in the lower of the two bunks.

"Kelly!" gasped Donohue. "He's—he's—"

"Dead—of course!" cut in Taber. "Can't you see the knife sticking out of his back? The foo—"

He broke off, crossed the room and slipped his hand under Kelly's body, to feel if there was heart action.

"Dead, sure," he growled, straightening up. "Murdered. Hr-rumph!"

Kelly was in a kneeling position, the lower part of his body resting on the floor and the upper part on the berth His fingers were gripping the bed clothes as if he had clutched them as he fell.

There was only one door to the room. The murderer must have locked the door after him and taken the key with him as he

fled. The shade was drawn over the window, and when Captain Mac went to open the window in order to air the room, he saw that it was secured with a catch that could be opened only from within.

Taber was looking down at the bone-handled knife that protruded from beneath the dead man's shoulder blade. The big man seemed puzzled, and several times he glanced questioningly at Donohue.

"All you have to do now, Cap'n," he said, with a side glance at the lean little ship-master, "is find out who killed him. Hr-rumph!"

Captain Mac pursed his lips thoughtfully, and turned to Donohue.

"Donohue, who was this suspected criminal that Kelly sent for just before you called me?"

"What? What? You sent for a—a suspected criminal?" demanded Taber. "I knew— Say, who did you send? That's the thing, who did you send?"

"He was a room-steward," said the detective. "I'm not sure which one. I didn't get a good look at him. He knocked at the door and Kelly opened the door and spoke to him. I'm pretty sure it was the man who takes care of this room, though."

"And who did you send him for?" asked Captain Mac again.

Donohue opened his mouth to speak, but closed it again, and an anxious, uncertain look passed over his face. Directly before him stood Taber, and the big man was frowning at him so threateningly that the detective faltered and mumbled unintelligently.

"It's not who he sent for; it's who he sent," rumbled Taber. "That's the thing we want to know."

"But I want to know the man that was sent for," insisted the captain.

"I tell you—"

"Mr. Taber, I'm in command of this ship!" Captain Mac's voice was like chilled steel. "I will do my best to get to the bottom of this thing, and if you insist on interfering I'll have you confined in your room. I want to know the man whom Kelly suspected of being a criminal, the man that he sent for just before he was murdered."

Taber made no answer, but his threatening gaze never left Donohue for a moment.

"I—I don't know who it was," faltered the detective. "I—I think maybe Kelly made a mistake."

"Mistake is right!" agreed Taber. "I tell you the thing to do is, find the man who was sent on that errand."

He turned slowly and studied each of them in turn, his black eyes stabbing and probing and his heavy brows knotted in a thoughtful frown. The retired butcher, his eyes wide with the horror and his mouth hanging open, was standing by the doorway, just inside the room. By his side stood Shattuck, the mate. Captain Mac was in the center of the room. Taber was standing on the far side of the body sprawled half across the berth. Donohue was in the corner at Shattuck's right.

"That knife, now," said Taber, "we might find somebody that knows who it belonged to—"

There was a sharp click. The electric bulb overhead glowed red for a tiny fraction of a second, then went out. The room became pitch black. There came the sound of cautious feet moving across the floor.

From somewhere sounded a hoarse gasp, then a short, high shriek of pain.

THE light clicked on, and Shattuck, the mate, was seen to be standing by the light switch with his hand upon it. Otherwise the five men were standing in exactly the same places they had been when the light went out.

"That cry — the window!" exclaimed Dumphries.

With surprizing agility he leaped to the window sill and clambered through. Captain Mac sprang also to the window, but did not climb through. Instead, he put out his head and looked up and down the deck. Donohue came and looked over his shoulder.

Dumphries was bending over a man who lay in the waterway by the rail, about fifteen feet from the window. As Dumphries moved to one side they saw that the man on deck was a white-coated steward.

"Stabbed in the throat!" called Dumphries over his shoulder. "He's not dead, though."

Donohue climbed through the window and dropped to the deck. He looked fore and aft, then went to the rail and looked overside.

"Why—why, it's impossible!" he exclaimed. "Where did the man go who did

the stabbing? The nearest passageway is fifty feet away. We had our heads out that window two seconds after he yelled. The man who did the stabbing didn't have time to get to a passageway or to climb in through one of those windows. The waiter is about fifteen feet from any window and couldn't have been stabbed by somebody reachin' out. It's like a man bein' stabbed in the middle of a desert with nobody around!"

"Is the knife there?" asked Captain Mac.

"No," answered Dumphries.

The heads of passengers awakened by that piercing shriek were being put out windows along the side of the passenger quarters, and excited questions were flying back and forth. Two sailors came running from forward and the saloon watchman came from the dining saloon.

Donohue bent over the wounded man.

"Why, it's the man Kelly sent—it's the room-steward!" he cried.

The two sailors picked up the wounded steward and carried him off, and the watchman went to rouse out the ship's surgeon.

Captain Mac turned away from the window and faced Taber, who had not moved. The surly man was staring down at Kelly's body with a dumbfounded look on his face.

"What now?" asked Captain Mac; and then, following the big man's gaze, "the knife, the bone-handled knife!" he cried. "It's gone!"

"Sure, it is," growled Taber. "That's what I'm trying to figure out—where did it go?"

"But you were standing right here—"

"Sure! I was standing here looking at it!"

"And you don't know where it went?"

"No, I don't."

"I think," said the captain firmly, "I'll have to call a couple of men and have you searched."

"You needn't call any men. Search me yourself. No objection. Here—"

He held his arms shoulder high as Captain Mac ran his hands over his clothes. The knife was not on Taber's person. Shattuck helped Captain Mac search the room, and Donohue and Dumphries came in while they were doing it. The detective swore hotly when he heard about the disappearance of the knife.

"Somebody grabbed it when the light went out, that's what," he said. "How did that light come to go out, anyhow?"

They all looked at Shattuck.

"I don't know who put it out," said he. "I switched it on."

"We-ell, it's a queer case," grumbled Donohue.

He bent his head and stared down at the body of the man who had been his superior and friend, and when he faced them again his eyes were hot with anger and his jaw was square with sudden resolution. There was defiance in his voice when he spoke, and it seemed to be directed at Taber in particular.

"I'll tell you one thing, though, I'm gonna get the man who killed old Kelly—or I'll know the reason why!"

"The reason why may be a piece of cold steel," growled Taber.

"That's all right. I'll take that chance. Maybe I ain't the best detective in the world, but I ain't a fool either. You can call me a cheese detective if you want, but nobody can call me a quitter. I ain't sayin' what I know, but I gotta idea in my nut and I'm gonna follow it up." He patted his hip pocket. "And the guy that tries to work on me with a knife is liable to get his front collar button blown through the back of his neck! You can pass the word around to your friends, Taber."

Captain Mac started, and glanced quickly at Taber. What did Donohue mean? Was he implying that Taber had something to do with the murder of Kelly? That remark should receive some earnest thought, decided the little shipmaster.

Taber appeared entirely unconcerned. Shattuck was studying the fire and collision instructions framed and posted beside the doorway. The retired Brooklyn butcher was staring at the dead man with a morbid curiosity, and with the horror of one who has always led a quiet, peaceful, law-abiding life.

"Well, gentlemen," said the captain, "I'll hold a sort of inquest at ten o'clock tomorrow morning. I'll expect you all to be there, in the social hall."

They filed out. Captain Mac shut and fastened the window, stepped outside and shut and locked the door.

Dumphries, who had a stateroom all to himself, politely offered to share it with Donohue, but the detective firmly shook his head. Taber, greatly to Captain Mac's

surprise, made a similar offer, and the detective, after some thought, accepted. They murmured subdued good-nights and went toward their respective staterooms.

As Captain Mac made his way to the bridge, there were so many questions tumbling about in his head that he did not know which to attempt to answer first.

Who had murdered Kelly? Who was the man Kelly had sent for? Donohue knew, but wouldn't tell because Taber had motioned him not to. Why did Donohue obey Taber? And at the same time Donohue had been defiant toward him. What was there between them? Who was Taber, anyway?

There were other questions: Who had attempted to murder the room steward, and why? How had he been stabbed while on the open deck with no one near? Had the knife been thrown? Perhaps, thought the captain, but what had become of the knife? And what had become of the other knife, the bone-handled one that Kelly had been killed with? Had Taber somehow disposed of it? Ah, there was Taber again!

Taber was friendly with Dumphries but surly toward every one else. Still, he had offered to share his room with Donohue. And Donohue had accepted Taber's offer in preference to harmless-appearing little Dumphries! Was Donohue trying to gather evidence against Taber? Was Taber planning to murder Donohue?

All these questions, and many others, remained unanswered as Captain Mac rolled into his bunk and closed his eyes.

SHORTLY before ten the following morning the stewards passed the word throughout the passenger quarters that all passengers were requested to assemble in the social hall. They were not slow in obeying the request. Rumors had been flying, and curiosity brought the passengers quicker than a peremptory order backed by force would have.

The meeting, strictly speaking, was not an inquest. The passengers seated themselves or stood about the captain who quickly gave them an outline of the events of the night before. The passengers buzzed, but became silent and attentive as the ship's surgeon testified that Kelly, the detective, was dead—had been killed by being stabbed several times in the back with a sharp-pointed weapon, probably a knife. The steward, Pietro Shapiro his name was, was badly wounded, but would probably recover. His wound was not exactly a stab; it was more of a slice, a sharp-edged weapon having passed across his throat from the side, missing the jugular vein but partly severing a neck muscle. Having lost much blood, he was in a comatose state. The surgeon would not commit himself as to when he thought the steward would be able to answer questions.

At this point Captain Mac addressed them.

"Now, it may be that some of you have information that would partly or entirely clear up this mystery. If so, I should be grateful for your assistance in bringing the murderer to justice."

An abundance of "information" came from the passengers, but when sifted it proved to be of little value. One woman had seen a suspicious-looking man prowling about at ten o'clock, or a little before. No, she could not identify him. In fact, she had seen only his back, and that from quite a distance. Another had heard a low-voiced conversation outside her room, but had not been able to make out the words—"of course," she added quickly, "I didn't try to do that." An uncertain old man said that he had seen two men talking together about midnight, or maybe it was only about eleven-thirty. He had risen for a drink of water, and happened to glance out the window. One of the men had on a white jacket, must have been a waiter, or steward. The other? Well, he did not know; couldn't be sure, anyway. Seemed like the other man was big, with broad shoulders, like—like—the old man looked around—like Mr. Taber.

"I was in the smoking room, playing poker with Mr. Dumphries and three other gentlemen from eight to after midnight," growled Taber without even turning to face the faltering old man.

Well, nobody was being accused—Taber needn't get sore. On second thought, the broad-shouldered man of the night before might have looked more like the chief officer. What was his name—Shattuck?

Shattuck shook his head and spat disgustedly out a port.

Was the man in uniform? Well, maybe; the old man wasn't sure. Did he have on a

uniform cap? Seems like he did; or no, was he bare-headed, now? Well——

The old man's wife reached out for him and he retired in confusion.

Captain Mac dismissed them with thanks. If the meeting was not really an inquest, its finding was of as much consequence as such findings usually are. Nothing of importance had come to light. A man had been killed and another wounded by a person or persons unknown. The mystery was still a mystery, and since there was not even a likely clew, not even a suspect, seemed destined to remain so.

Of one thing Captain Mac was certain: at the bottom of it all were three kegs of gold. Perhaps poor Kelly's talk of a master criminal had not been so wild after all.

Donohue seemed to have become suddenly knowing and hopeful, as if he had got a glimmer of light where Captain Mac had failed. As the captain left to go above, he saw that the detective had cornered the bewildered old gentleman and was plying him vigorously with questions, while big Taber, beside whom stood round, red-cheeked little Dumphries, looked on with frowning disapproval.

The combination of Donohue, Taber and Dumphries seemed past all understanding. Captain Mac was a tough, two-fisted fighting man, but not a detective. It seemed that the most he could do would be to make a full report to the authorities upon the vessel's arrival in port.

THE days passed, while the *Penguin* steamed steadily on her southerly course. She passed Watling Island and entered Crooked Island Passage, left Castle Island astern and rounded Whitehorse Point, and entered the Gulf of Gonave. Just one hundred hours after leaving New York they had Lamentine light abeam, and since it is against the law of Haiti to enter any port of the Black Republic between the hours of 6 P.M. and 6 A.M., they were forced to drop anchor outside the Port-au-Prince harbor-buoy.

It was a beautiful night, and nearly all of the ship's passengers were on deck, some leaning on the rails and watching the star-tracked surface of the bay as they talked, others in groups of deck-chairs beneath the awnings. Port-au-Prince and the hills behind loomed in the dark like a giant Christmas tree loaded with twinkling lights. Now and then a charcoal fire blazed red in the wooded hills to the southward, then died.

A group had gathered on the forward end of the promenade deck, just beneath the bridge. Round-cheeked little Dumphries was telling them of the trials and tribulations of a Brooklyn butcher's life, and his clear voice carried to Captain Mac, on the bridge.

"Oh, there's plenty of work to the butcher business. For years I stood behind a counter from early morning till six o'clock at night, twelve on Saturdays. To look at me, little fellow like I am, you wouldn't think I could wrestle big fores and quarters around, hang them on hooks in the box, take them down and throw them on the block and chop them up, but I can. Hard work. But I had my fun, too. Sometimes on Sundays I'd take the old lady and the kids to Prospect Park and put the kids on the swan boats. How the little geezers did enjoy it! Or sometimes we'd go to the Island.

"Now the old lady and the kids are out in Pennsylvania, and I'm here. Glad to be here, too! I'm going to have a good time. First time I was ever away from home alone. I'm no rounder, you understand, but I'm no mossback either, and I haven't forgot how to step out. Just wait till we hit old Colon—eh, Taber?"

He laughed, as he had a habit of doing on the slightest excuse. His laugh was catching, however, and the others laughed with him at nothing, and loudest of all laughed Taber, his lion's roar booming out as if at some great joke. The others became suddenly silent. There was a strange threatening note in the surly man's laugh, and only care-free little Dumphries seemed not to mind it. In his sprightly way he went on to tell them of how he had earned the right to call himself "Brooklyn's Best Butcher."

A native fishing boat slid silently by, its patched and dirty sails standing out for a while in the glare of the steamer's lights, then it was gone.

"Say, did you see that?" exclaimed Dumphries.

Some of them had noticed the fishing boat, others had not.

"Just think," went on the butcher, "a boat like that could come alongside this ship at night, after everybody was asleep, and nobody would know it. Couldn't it?"

"The men on watch would see it," put in one of them.

"Oh, are there men on watch all night when the ship's at anchor like this?"

"Oh, yes."

"How many men?"

"Well, I'm not sure, Mr. Dumphries, but— Here's the chief officer; ask him."

Mr. Shattuck, who had been passing, was stopped, and the question was put to him.

"Well, there's always a quartermaster on watch, most of the time on the bridge," the mate told them. "If the gangway is rigged out he's there. Then there's a sailor who acts as assistant to the quartermaster. Then there's an officer on watch. You're liable to find him any place. In freight ships they usually turn in and sleep, but in passenger ships they have to be up and around. You'll usually find him at the gangway, or on the bridge, or in his room, or maybe swapping lies with the purser or engineer, or whoever happens to be awake. Then, there are the men below decks, the engineer's gang."

"But they wouldn't know if a boat came alongside?"

"Not likely, unless they happened to pick that time to sneak above for some air."

"It wouldn't be so easy as I thought, then," said Dumphries. "Thanks, Mr. Shattuck."

"You're welcome," said Shattuck, and passed on.

An hour or so later Captain Mac came upon Taber, Shattuck and Donohue talking together on the saloon deck. Donohue caught the captain by the sleeve and stopped him.

"I'm after 'em, Cap'n," he said enthusiastically. "The guys that killed poor Kelly, I mean. There was one guy did it, but some others mixed up with him. You'd be surprized at all the information I been pickin' up since that night. I get a little bit here, and a little bit there, then I piece it together till it looks like somethin'. I haven't got what you'd call brains, but I'm a pluggin' sort of a biscuit.

"Why, do you know," he went on, "I can tell you how that murder was committed and all about it."

"You can!" exclaimed Captain Mac.

"What d'you mean?" asked Shattuck, leaning forward.

"Well, I can tell you everything but who did it."

"Hr-rumph!" snorted Taber derisively.

"I'll tell you how it was. There's a big criminal aboard here, a super-criminal, like Kelly said, and he's got a gang with him. I can't tell you who he is yet. I ain't certain that I know for sure anyway. Kelly thought he knew, but maybe he had the wrong guy in mind. Anyway, Kelly was on his track, and that's why he was killed."

"Do you mean this master criminal did it?" asked Captain Mac.

"No-o, I don't think so. I think one of his gang did. When the room steward went to look for this big crook, he happened to come up with one of the gang. 'Do you know where Mr. So-and-so is, sir,' asks the steward. 'What do you want him for?' asks the other guy. 'Mr. Kelly, the company detective, wants him,' answers the steward. 'He does, does he? What does he want him for?' asks the other guy. 'I don't really know, sir,' says the steward, 'but I did hear 'im say somethin' about pinchin' 'im. He told me to keep my mouth closed, sir, and I hope you won't let it go on.'

"Well, as soon as he gets away from the steward, this guy comes below, peeks in Kelly's room, sees he's alone, and sticks a knife in his back. You see, this guy don't know that there are two of us detectives aboard, and he thinks he's savin' So-and-so by croakin' Kelly. They're after three-quarters of a million, and won't let anything stand in their way. He's in such a hurry to get out of his room that he forgets to take the knife with him. And about that knife—darn if I know where it went to."

"And why was the steward's throat cut?" asked Taber.

"Well, maybe the steward happened to come along and look in the window, and maybe he got frightened and didn't know what to do, and while he was standing there this murderer came along and tried to kill him so he couldn't put us on the track."

"And then what did the murderer do—sprout wings and flutter away?" asked Taber sarcastically.

"Well, I told you there was some things I haven't figured out yet. But I'm on the trail, don't you worry about that. I might go stumblin' along, and fall down once in a while, but I'll get there in the end. I expect to have the goods on this guy within twenty-four hours."

"The police are investigating," rumbled Taber.

"Wise cracks don't make any impression on me," retorted Donohue complacently.

"That's right, Donohue. Do what you think is right," said Captain Mac.

"Waste of time, I think," said Shattuck. "Why not let the people ashore worry about it?"

"Aw, let him alone," put in Taber sourly. "He'll wind up by getting his liver carved, or his head cracked, then he'll be satisfied."

CAPTAIN MAC left them and made his way below, to the main deck. On a soap-box before the door of the specie-locker sat a seaman, a navy Colt belted to his side. The captain had given orders that the locker be constantly guarded while the ship was in port, and that the officer of the watch pay it frequent visits.

The seaman rose quickly as the captain advanced.

"Everything all right?" asked Captain Mac, examining the padlock on the door.

"Yes, sir; all right," answered the sailor, touching his cap. "Ain't seen nothin' suspicious, sir. Nobody's been around but some coal-heavers, and I chased 'em in short order. The lazy bums, they was just tryin' to hide out on the water-tender. Then I hadda tell a passenger that he wasn't allowed below here."

"A passenger?"

"Yes, sir; a big bloke with a mouth like a bulldog. He just growls at me and goes off mad. If he wasn't a passenger, and me a sailor, I think I'd 'a' took a poke at 'im, sir."

"Keep everybody away from this locker. I mean both passengers and crew. They don't have to use this passageway. Keep them out. You can sit down and smoke your pipe if you want, but keep your eyes open."

"Thank you, Cap'n. I'll keep my eyes peeled all right."

Captain Mac returned to the bridge, where he met the third mate, who was about to go on watch.

"Keep an eye on the specie-locker, Mister," the captain told him. "And don't be afraid to call me if you want me."

"Yes, sir," answered the third mate, and went below.

At eleven o'clock Captain Mac turned in, as he would have to be up early to take the ship to the wharf. All night alert, able men would be on watch. The ship was in a harbor of a country policed thoroughly by U. S. Marines and native gendarmerie, and the captain fell asleep scoffing at the idea that any number of men, no matter how clever, or how well-laid their plans, could successfully plunder the *Penguin's* strong-room and get away with over a ton of specie.

It was still dark when he awoke, or rather, was awakened by voices on the bridge, just forward of his sleeping room.

"No, can't sleep. Ate too many o' them bananas we got from that bumboat, I guess." This was Mr. Shattuck's voice. "Thought I might as well get up anyway. I want to call Chips pretty soon and shorten up on the anchor. Then I want him to knock the wedges off the hatches so we can begin to open 'er up soon's the crew is called. You might as well turn in and get a couple hours sleep, Mr. Simms. The old girl don't need two of us on watch at the same time. I'll take 'er."

"You're welcome, Mister! She's all yours! Me for the hay."

Footsteps sounded outside the captain's door as the second mate passed on the way to his room. The chief mate could be heard descending the bridge ladder.

The captain sat up. The radium-dial clock at the foot of his berth said it was two-thirty o'clock. He hoped Mr. Shattuck wouldn't take in too much anchor chain. Though Shattuck seemed an experienced officer, he had been in the *Penguin* but five days, and the captain wasn't sure of him. An inexperienced mate could very easily make the mistake of taking in so much chain that the flukes of the anchor would be turned up out of the bottom allowing the anchor to drag. A ship's anchor is a tricky thing.

Thinking he had better look to the shortening up of the anchor chain himself, Captain Mac arose and dressed. He went below, through the social hall and saloon, and came out upon the port side of the saloon deck, where a gangway had been rigged for the pilot and doctor when they should come out at six o'clock. On the upper platform of the gangway, beneath a shaded drop-light, stood the quartermaster on watch.

"Where did Mr. Shattuck go, quartermaster?" asked the captain.

"He went below about fifteen minutes ago sir. He probably went to take a look at the specie-locker. He told me to stay here, sir—not to move."

"That's right."

Captain Mac waited about ten minutes but as the mate still did not come on deck, the captain started below. As he neared the bottom of the ladder, a narrow, inclosed ladder with an abrupt turn halfway down, he saw that the main deck lights were out. Wondering, he felt his way along the dark fore-and-aft passageway toward the thwart-ship alley that led to the specie-locker.

There were no passenger quarters on the main deck. Forward, in the bows, was the sailors' forecastle, and aft, beneath the poop, was the firemen's forecastle. The fire-room fiddley and engine-room trunk were amidship, separated from each other by the alleyway into which opened the specie-locker. Far below were the fire-room and engine-room, and part way along the sides of the latter were reserve coal-bunkers that extended forward to beneath the thwartship alleyway.

It was the corrugated surface of a bunker plate beneath his feet that told Captain Mac when he was at the intersection of the two passages. He felt his way around the corner and opened his mouth to call to the guard at the locker. But he did not call. Instead, he crouched low, on his toes, his wiry body tensed and one hand stretched out before him.

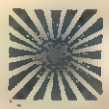
Crouching there, tensed, his every sense alert, it seemed to him that he had his fingers on the very pulse of the ship, and he heard sounds that he had not heard consciously for years. From the engine-room came the monotonous clack and thump of a pump and the drone of a motor. From the fire-room came the clanging of slice-bars and shovels and the clatter of an iron bucket being dragged over floor-plates. The ash-hoist was clashing and banging as it lifted ashes to be shot into the bay by the ejector. Somewhere steam was escaping. These are the sounds that cause passengers sleepless nights, but that a steamship man hears no more than a traffic policeman hears the roar of the traffic.

All these sounds came with startling distinctness. But closer, almost within reach of his outstretched hand, there was something else—breathing, the strained, jerky, open-mouthed breathing of a man who is trying hard not to be heard!

The little captain moved forward, very, very softly, a few inches, and crouched lower, ready to spring, one hand feeling before him, the other clenched at his hip, ready to strike out as soon as he was sure of direction and distance.

Again he edged forward, and cautiously described an arc in the darkness with his outstretched left hand. It took iron courage and tight-reined nerves to feel about like this in the darkness for an invisible opponent, perhaps for a man who had already committed one murder and attempted another, a dangerous, reckless criminal who would stop at nothing.

He heard the rustle of clothing, and at the same time his finger-tips brushed against cloth. Captain Mac leaped, and swung his right fist in a short arc, heard it *plop* into a soft, yielding stomach, and a whistling gasp as the breath was driven from the other's lungs. The unknown went down, and the captain, anxious not to let him escape, fell on top. Then a light flashed in his face, blinding him, and something hard crashed against the back of his head. There was a shower of red, white and blue stars, an agonizing stab of pain in his head, and he collapsed, unconscious.



HE SEEMED to come floating up out of a vast, black pit. The darkness lightened to gray, and forms began to take shape about him. Words came to him from a great distance: "Cut the —— thing. Easy now! That's it." "Got away with it, eh?" "Yep, clean away." "How about Cap'n Mac, is he coming out of it?" "Yeah. Help me lift him up." "No, let him lay on his back; that's the best way—never set a man up when he's hurt."

Captain Mac wrenched himself into full consciousness, and forced himself to sit up.

"Now you're all right, Cap'n," said a voice. "Just a crack on the head, that's all."

The man bending over Captain Mac was an assistant engineer. Some feet away stood Shattuck, the mate. He was briskly chafing his wrists, to start the circulation of blood. Near him on deck lay several pieces of manila cordage, and a handkerchief that had evidently been used as a gag. Taber stood near-by, in one hand an open

pocket-knife. An oiler and two firemen stood gazing curiously from the starboard end of the alleyway.

When the captain turned and looked toward the specie-locker, he saw that the door swung open. He reached up, caught the assistant engineer's hand and raised himself to his feet.

"Yep, it's gone, Cap'n," said the engineer, in answer to the captain's questioning look.

"All three kegs are gone, sir," put in Mr. Shattuck. "They got clean away with it."

The captain went to the locker and looked in. It was indeed empty.

"But they can't have got off the ship," he said unbelievingly.

"They did, just the same. They're gone, and so are the three kegs of specie."

"You mean that they got clean away from the ship? It's not possible."

"Oh, yes, it is," insisted Shattuck. "They've got a schooner, a three-masted tops'l schooner, and they sent some men alongside us in a small boat. Didn't you see that tops'l schooner laying off there toward Arcadins reef?"

"No, I didn't."

"Well, she was there, just the same. I saw it as I came down from the bridge."

"I saw it too, Cap'n," put in one of the firemen, a big-chested man with a blue bandanna bound about his head.

"So did I," added the other.

The captain looked at them. They both wore dungaree trousers and sleeveless undershirts, and each had a grimy sweat-rag knotted about his neck. They both were covered with a coating of coal dust.

"How did you two come to see it?" asked the captain.

"We was up on the topside trimmin' the ventilators, sir," answered the one with the bandanna. "It was a big gray schooner with three masts. We seen 'er in the moonlight."

"Did you see the small boat?"

"We saw it when it pulled away, sir, with the blokes in it pullin' like blazes, but we didn't think nothin' of it."

"She was a motor schooner," put in Shattuck. "I heard 'er making out while I was hanging here with my hands tied to a beam overhead. With this nor'east wind shoving her on and her motors going for all they're worth, she must be making between fifteen and eighteen knots by now. They must have had the anchor a-weigh, and when the boat came alongside with the kegs they just hooked her aboard and cracked on full ahead."

"No chance of us catchin' 'er," said the engineer, "if she's makin' as much as you say she is."

"What became of the guard?" asked Captain Mac, looking around.

"The doc's puttin' a coupla stitches in his head," answered the engineer. "Somebody smacked him on the nut. I had a coupla men help him up. He ain't hurt so bad."

"It was me that found you, you know," he went on. "I come up from below and saw the lights was out, so I got a flashlight and looked in the fuse-box, and saw that somebody's pulled a fuse. I put another one in, and when the lights went on I saw you layin' there on your back, and in front of the specie-locker I saw the sailor what was on guard, and Mr. Shattuck was triced up with his hand to a beam and a gag in his mouth. Then this gent comes along"—indicating the scowling Taber—"and we cuts the mate down, and I sends a coupla men up to the doc with the sailor."

The captain turned to Shattuck.

"How did it happen, Mister?"

"I don't know, Cap'n," the mate shook his head and spread his hands with a helpless gesture, "I came down about two-thirty to see if everything was all right. Briggs, the sailor, was sitting there on the box, and when he sees me he gets up—and then the lights went out! I heard Briggs get cracked, then about four guys jumped on me and one of 'em gets a strangle-hold from behind, so I couldn't yell. Then they triced me up and puts a rag in my mouth, and I could hear 'em knock the padlock off the door with a maul. One of 'em had a flashlight, and he flashed it around while they were rolling the kegs to the crew's gangway door and into the boat. Then you came along, but I couldn't yell and warn you on account of the gag. They downs you and gets away. That's all I know."

"Which side of the ship was the boat on?"

"The starb'rd side, sir."

"H'mm. Then the quartermaster didn't see it?"

"I don't see how he could. But we can ask him."

CAPTAIN MAC looked at Taber. The big man was silent and sullen, and in his dogged way seemed to be pondering deeply.

"And how about you, Mr. Taber?" asked the captain.

"Well?"

"How did you come to be roaming around at two-thirty in the morning?"

"I was just roaming," growled Taber.

"Any explanation?"

"Nope; none at all, Cap'n."

"I'm afraid I must insist. I don't know what you have to do with this affair, but I'm certain you're mixed up in it some way, for I meet you at every turn. Always you're near-by when something happens. If you refuse to make a full explanation right here and now, I'll have to turn you over to the authorities at Cristobal."

"Do that, Cap'n," said Taber, entirely unconcerned.

He seemed too occupied with his thoughts to pay much attention to anything else. He suddenly looked up, however, and barked—

"How about that schooner—can she get away?"

"Not a chance!" answered Captain Mac. "She hasn't a chance in the world. She'll be captured inside four or five hours."

"Her being a tops'l schooner ought to make it easier," put in Shattuck. "I don't think there are more than half a dozen tops'l schooners in the world, and they won't have any trouble recognizing her."

"Oh, that may be just a false rig," said the captain. "They may be making her back into a regular fore-and-after right now. And they could paint her a different color inside a few hours. But that doesn't make any difference. The marines will hold every schooner they get their hands on, no matter what her rig or color."

Captain Mac and Mr. Shattuck left them and went above, to the saloon-deck, where they stopped and questioned the quartermaster, still standing by the gangway on the port side.

"No, sir," said the man, "I haven't seen any boat or any schooner. The way we're layin' I can't see over toward Arcadins, and I couldn't see a boat come alongside the other side of the ship anyway."

"Have you seen any one on deck?" asked the captain.

"Well, I saw that big gentleman with the black suit and the black hat pulled down over his eyes. Then that little fat feller that tells everybody about what a good butcher he was in Brooklyn, he was out a little while ago, wearing' a bathrobe and slippers—said he didn't feel good, and couldn't sleep. He went around to the other side and I didn't see him any more. That's all, sir, I guess—Oh, no, what's-'is-name—Donohue, the company flatfoot, was lookin' out his window a while back, just before you came down from the bridge, and Mr. Shattuck stopped and talked to him as he went by. I heard Donohue say: 'Oh, I'll get 'im, don't worry about that. The bracelets are as good as on his wrists now. I'm gettin' closer to 'im all the time.' Then Mr. Shattuck said something low and went below."

Captain Mac turned to Shattuck.

"What did Donohue mean—that he expected to capture the man who murdered Kelly?"

Shattuck snorted contemptuously.

"Yeah, the poor nut can't forget that he's on the pay-roll as a detective."

"Maybe he's not so stupid as you think. He's persistent, at least."

"Humph!" snorted Shattuck again.

Leaving the mate standing by the gangway with the quartermaster, Captain Mac went above to the wireless room on the bridge deck aft. He roused the operator, who was drowsing in a chair before his apparatus, and told him to get in communication with the Port-au-Prince radio station.

"Phrase the message any way you want," said the captain. "Inform the commanding officer of the American Occupation that this ship has been robbed of three-quarters of a million in gold coin, contained in three small kegs. We suspect that it has been put aboard a gray three-masted tops'l schooner which was lying somewhere between the outer harbor buoy and Arcadins at two-thirty this morning. Ask him to take whatever measures he thinks necessary to recover the specie and capture the robbers."

The operator was surprized and curious, but dared not ask questions, and silently scribbled the message on a pad.

"Very well, sir; I'll send it immediately."

Captain Mac was very thoughtful as he left the wireless shack. The impossible had happened, the ship had been plundered of her specie in spite of his conviction that it could not be done. He felt certain that

there were men aboard the *Penguin* who were connected with the robbers. Perhaps the ring-leader himself was aboard. It was maddening to think that he had had his hands on one of the gang and had not been able to capture him. And he had not so much as a glimpse of a face to console him. He had seen no one. Neither had Shattuck, or the guard, or the quartermaster, or any one else whom he could trust to aid him. Taber bewildered him entirely, and he knew not what to think.

DAY was breaking now. Going to the bridge, the captain took the binoculars from their box and swept the surface of the gulf. The off-shore breeze was freshening, and a fleet of native boats was skimming toward Gonave Island. A brown-sailed sloop was putting out from behind Lamentin Point, and two more were coming from the Haitian "Navy Yard," but nowhere within range of his binoculars was there a schooner, with square topsails or otherwise. She had a good start, he reasoned, and by now must be nearly twenty miles on her way to the Windward Passage. Even so, there would be small chance of her eluding the airplanes that would be sent after her from Port-au-Prince.

Mr. Shattuck came out upon the foredeck and called up to Captain Mac:

"I'm going to shorten up now, Cap'n."

"All right. Nine fathoms, Mister."

"Nine fathoms, sir."

He started toward the forecastle-head, shouting for the carpenter as he went.

"Hey, Mr. Shattuck! Come quick!" cried a voice. "Murder! Dead—dying—"

"Who—what? Talk so I can understand you, you woodenhead," thundered the big mate. "Who was murdered, and where is he?"

"In his room!" panted the quartermaster. "That big man with the black suit and hat found him. Mr. Donohue, the detective."

"You mean that Donohue has been murdered?"

"Yes, sir. The big passenger told me to call the doc, and I did."

"Well—"

Shattuck hesitated.

"You go for'rd and shorten up, Mister," ordered Captain Mac. "I'm coming below myself."

Another man murdered! Donohue this time. "Who next?" moaned Captain Mac as he made his way below to the saloon deck passenger quarters.

But Donahue was not dead, nor was he even badly wounded. He was on the operating table in the sick bay, and was hotly cursing his ill-fortune, not in being wounded, but because he had not seen the man who had attacked him.

Donohue had not heard of the robbery. Taber, for some reason that Donohue did not, or could not, explain, had been up all night, and his continual coming and going had made the company detective restless. After talking through his window with Shattuck, he had returned to his berth and tried to sleep. He heard some one in the room and, thinking it was Taber, he twisted about to speak to him. His half-turn probably saved his life. A knife, descending, slid off his shoulder-blade and ripped a six-inch gash in his back. The would-be assassin had lost his knife and, to hinder the rise of Donohue, he had tossed on top of him the bedclothes from the berth above, and so made his escape, unrecognized. Taber, entering the room a few seconds later, found Donohue trying to stop the flow of blood with a torn sheet, and had helped him to the sick bay, a few doors along the corridor. Then the big passenger had sent the quartermaster for the captain or one of the officers.

"What became of the knife?" asked Captain Mac.

"Here it is, Cap'n," answered Taber, as he handed the captain a wooden-handled clasp-knife that had an inch or so of its blade broken off.

The ship's surgeon was bending over Donohue, who, stripped to the waist, lay face down on the table.

"The point of the knife broke off and is in his back, just beneath the skin," exclaimed the surgeon.

He began to probe in the wound with a pair of tweezers.

"Now, this won't hurt you, Donohue—," he began.

"Rats!" snapped the detective, gripping the table edge. "You ain't talkin' to a kid."

"Well, then it'll hurt like ——!" answered the surgeon angrily. "How's that?"

"Better. I'm a tough potato—dig away, Doc."

Taber's eyes glinted for a moment with

admiration, then the disgruntled look came again to his face.

"Hr-rumph!" he snorted. Then, after a pause, "Donohue, you'd be a good detective but for one thing—you're dumb."

"Blah!" retorted Donohue. "*You're* not so smart as I thought you were. *I'm* dumb and I know it; *you're* dumb and don't know it, and wouldn't admit it if you did."

"Keep still, Donohue!" warned the surgeon; and to Taber, "Please don't talk to him till this is over."

"You had better leave the room, Mr. Taber," put in Captain Mac. "We appreciate your help, but you're a bit too officious for a passenger."

Taber shrugged, snorted, and passed out of the sick bay.

CAPTAIN MAC left immediately after, and turned to go forward. As he passed Dumphries' room the red-cheeked little butcher put his head out the window.

"How is he, Captain?"

"Who?"

"Mr. Donohue. Is—is he all right? I mean will he live?"

"He'll live. How did you know about him, Mr. Dumphries?"

"Why, I saw Mr. Taber helping him to the doctor, and I guessed.

"Terrible, isn't it, Captain?" he went on. "I was so upset all night that I couldn't sleep. This man, this murderer who's aboard, who is he going to attack next? Why, at this very moment he may be planning to murder you or me!"

"Why you?" asked Captain Mac.

"No reason, I hope. I'm just—just upset, that's all. I'm dreadfully nervous. I'm not used to things like this. I wish I had stayed at home."

He swallowed nervously.

"I hope Mr. Donohue isn't going to die?"

"Oh, no, he isn't badly wounded."

"That's fine!"

Dumphries gave a long sigh of relief as the captain passed on.

The sun was up now, and the stewards had come from below and were hurrying to get the corridors cleaned before the passengers should begin to come from their rooms. On deck the boatswain and his men were washing down. They looked curiously at the captain as he passed, and whispered between themselves. The news of the morning's happenings had spread quickly, as ship news always does, and on each tongue was the same question—"What next?"

CAPTAIN MAC declared a sort of martial law aboard the *Penguin*. Six reliable seamen, in watches of two men each, armed with short, heavy billies, were to patrol the fore-deck, poop-deck, and the two passenger decks, day and night, as long as the vessel was in Port-au-Prince and while she should be crossing the Caribbean to Cristobal. The assistant purser, freight-clerk and assistant chief steward were to patrol the passenger quarters, including the dining saloon, social hall and smoking room, and they were given a loaded navy-type revolver to pass from one to the other as they changed watches. The chief engineer detailed three junior engineers to stand watches on the main deck.

When the *Penguin* went alongside the wharf, at six-thirty, the captain ordered the purser to place in several places aboard ship a notice saying that none, passengers or crew, were to be allowed ashore. The quartermaster at the gangway was told to allow no one off the vessel unless accompanied by an officer. And by arrangement with the officer in charge of the American Occupation a United States marine was stationed on the wharf to see that no one got by the quartermaster. There was much grumbling aboard, particularly among the passengers, but the order stood. Kelly's body was taken from the ice-box in which it had been placed and sent ashore, to be embalmed and shipped to New York.

The entire Haitian Navy was putting out from the "Navy Yard" to search for the gray topsail schooner. The "fleet" consisted of *L'Independence*, erstwhile American yacht, with a personnel of eleven natives commanded by three white men. Two Marine Corps airplanes had passed overhead shortly after six.

It came to light that others than Mr. Shattuck and the two firemen had seen the gray schooner. A fireman who was to go on watch at four o'clock had risen beforehand to scrub some clothes. The washroom was used continually during the day, he explained, and it was much easier to scrub alone at night than when the room was crowded with men scrambling for

water, for steam, and for pieces of unwatched soap. While scrubbing he had glanced through a port-hole, and had seen the schooner in the faint moonlight. Also, he had seen the pulling boat leave the *Penguin*, headed for the strange schooner, but had thought nothing of it at the time. There had been four men in the boat, he thought, but wasn't sure. He had not seen the kegs. The boat had been too far off when he noticed it, and he repeated that he had hardly more than glanced at it, then resumed his scrubbing.

Dumphries, the Brooklyn butcher, too had seen the schooner.

"I don't really know what a schooner is," he told Captain Mac, "but this was a big boat with sails, and had two or three masts —I didn't think to count them. She was either gray or white, I'm not sure which. Selling meat over a counter doesn't train your eyes to pick out the colors of ships at night— Gosh, I wish I was back there," he added, with a comical twist of his head.

"But how could you see the schooner, which was off the starboard quarter, when your room is on the port side?" asked Captain Mac.

"Eh? Well, I'll tell you. You see, I started to get a drink, but instead of going to the fountain in the saloon I got mixed up and came out on the other side of the ship. To tell you the truth, Captain, I get lost every time I leave my room. I'm not used to ships, you know—"

"I understand, Mr. Dumphries."

Captain Mac quickly discovered that there was no further information to be had. The passengers offered many suppositions, many solutions built upon the adverbs "perhaps" and "maybe," but nothing that the captain thought worth following up.

Many of the women passengers were in a state of mind bordering upon hysteria. Several of them refused to leave their rooms, and one, having locked herself in, shouted through the door that she was there to stay till "something is done," though she offered no suggestions as to the accomplishment of that which she wanted done. Some of the male passengers were frankly apprehensive; others were bolstering their courage with loud threats and denunciation directed against the unknown assassin. Several of the bolder spirits had even offered themselves to the captain, to patrol the corridors and decks.

He thanked them, but refused their services, saying that the trouble wasn't lack of men but lack of information.

"Keep your ears and eyes open, and come to me the minute you come across anything you think suspicious," he told them. "You can be of more help that way than by standing around with guns in your hands. And try to keep the others calm. That butcher, for instance. He's been blathering around all morning, and he's got half the women scared silly."

THE two airplanes returned to Port-au-Prince before noon. Their report was startling. They had not been able to discover the gray schooner. They had searched the entire Gulf of Gonave, but had seen nothing larger than native sloops. The aviators thought that perhaps the schooner had slipped into some inlet, or into the narrow channel behind Cayemites Island, where it would be partly hidden by trees. It was decided that in the afternoon the planes should thoroughly search the coasts of the gulf.

The *Penguin*, her Port-au-Prince cargo discharged, sailed at four o'clock. The planes had returned and reported that they could not find the mysterious schooner. Though it seemed almost impossible, the schooner must have in some way slipped out of the gulf, they said, and was now either in the Caribbean or headed northward toward the open Atlantic. *L'Independence* also had returned to port, with no news. The Port-au-Prince radio station had already broadcast a request that all ships keep a lookout for the schooner, and the news of the robbery had been cabled to New York.

The next morning after breakfast, long after the *Penguin* had rounded Cape Dame Marie and been put on the course that would take her across the Caribbean to Panama, Captain Mac went below to the room occupied by Donohue and Taber. Donohue was there alone. His breakfast had been brought to him and he was now dressing, awkwardly because of the bandages about his body.

"Donohue, what do you know about Taber?" asked the captain abruptly.

Donohue shook his head.

"Can't tell you that, Cap'n. I'd like to, honest, but I can't."

"You mean you refuse to tell me?"

"We-ell, I don't like to put it that way. I like you, Cap'n Mac, and I'd like to come clean and tell you all I know, but I can't. Matter of what you call professional ethics, if you get what I mean. I ain't tryin' to be smart, or anything like that, Cap'n, but, I just can't tell you, that's all.

"This darn thing's got me dizzy," he went on, with a gloomy shake of his head. "I'm hangin' on the ropes."

"But you're not going to give up, are you?"

"No! Not me! I'm goin' to get the guy that killed Kelly, if it takes ten years. But who the —— was it?" he mused. "It wasn't—" He broke off, leaving his sentence unfinished.

"Wasn't who?" prompted the captain.

"Never mind. I come near sayin' somethin' I don't want to say."

Captain Mac left with a feeling of resentment. It seemed that he, the master of the ship, was not considered worthy of the confidence of a two-by-four detective, he told himself bitterly. Still, perhaps Donohue was really sincere when he said that he had not the right to confide in any one. Perhaps there was some good reason why he shouldn't disclose Taber's business aboard the *Penguin*. The captain liked the unpretentious, persevering detective, in a way, and his anger faded quickly.

He went to his room and sent for the surgeon, and when the latter appeared, asked him—

"That man Shapiro, the room steward who was stabbed—can he answer questions?"

"Why, no, sir, not possibly. He's semi-unconscious, and part of the time delirious, and I'll be greatly relieved when he's off my hands and in the Colon hospital."

"All right, Doctor. That's all," said the captain wearily.

This was a disappointment indeed. Shapiro, could he talk, could give the name of the man whom Kelly had sent him for, and that man, according to Donohue, was the mainspring of the plot to steal the *Penguin's* specie. Also, he was doubtless the murderer of Kelly, who had been about to arrest him. The attempted murder of Shapiro fitted in nicely with this theory, which seemed logical to the troubled captain. But with Shapiro unable to talk, the little fighting man felt that he had run against a wall.

Peace prevailed aboard the ship as she steamed across the Caribbean. The special watchmen were alert and expectant, the officers made frequent rounds, but nothing happened. The tense feeling of apprehension among the passengers subsided. Donohue, as persistent as ever, continued his tireless questioning of passengers and crew. He still seemed hopeful, but at times there came a baffled expression to his face. Dumphries soon got over his spell of nerves and was again his merry self, interested in everything, and making a nuisance of himself by asking countless questions about the ship and her crew. He seemed especially interested in what the crew did while the ship was in port. "This is all new to me, you know," he would explain, "and when I get home my friends are going to be asking me the same questions I'm asking now, and I want to be able to answer. Now, for instance, how long is this ship usually in Cristobal before she leaves again for New York?"

Always at Dumphries' side was Taber, the surly passenger, and he seemed as interested in some things as was the little butcher, though Captain Mac, ever watchful, observed that Taber appeared to pay more attention to the questions asked by Dumphries than to the answers given.

THE *Penguin* docked at Cristobal in the morning of the third day after leaving Port-au-Prince. Before allowing the passengers ashore Captain Mac suggested to the Canal Zone police authorities that they detain Taber. They decided that Taber should be held as a material witness, and a detective approached the big man as he waited at the gangway, placed a hand on his arm and spoke in a low voice.

The big man turned, looked at the representative of the Canal Zone police, frowned thoughtfully for a moment, then looked at Captain Mac and gave a short, grunting laugh. Then he nodded, and went quietly down the gangway.

The hatches had been opened, and baggage and cargo was being lifted from the holds and swung to the pier. The passengers were streaming off the ship and mingling with the crowd on the pier. A special train had been run out on the pier for the convenience of those who were going inland or to the Pacific side of the Isthmus.

Captain Mac was pleased to hear that the schooner had been captured, but his satisfaction faded when he learned that not one, but at least a dozen schooners were being held in different parts of the world, some of them at impossible distances from the scene of the robbery. They were vessels of all types, colors and sizes. It seemed, from a reading of the newspapers the purser brought aboard, that the principle result of the search was a controversy as to what was a topsail schooner. One writer stoutly asserted that a topsail schooner was merely a schooner with topsails, and pertinently asked: "If a schooner with topsails isn't a topsail schooner, then what is it?" For three days the papers had been featuring the story, and all the way across the Caribbean Captain Mac had been deluged with frantic radiograms.

A representative of the U. P. and several reporters of the local papers came aboard, asked questions, made notes, took pictures of the ship, of Captain Mac, of Donohue, to his delight, of the specie-locker with its door open and two men lying in the passageway, to represent Captain Mac and the guard, and a man triced up by his wrists to an overhead beam, to represent Mr. Shattuck. They were disappointed when the captain and the mate refused to pose personally for these pictures. The captain begged off, saying he was not proud of his failure to prevent the plundering of the locker, while Shattuck refused point-blank to be photographed at all, in any position, triced up by his wrists or otherwise. In fact the latter became so incensed that he punched a photographer in the jaw and would have smashed the camera had not Captain Mac interfered.

"Well, let 'em keep away from me," snarled the mate. "I don't want my picture taken—if I did I'd go ashore and have it taken right. I don't want anybody chasing me around the ship with a —— camera."

The reporters and photographers grinned good-naturedly and went on with the business of getting news as if nothing had happened.

The next morning the purser brought Captain Mac a cablegram from the owners. The captain glanced through it, then read it aloud:

"*Penguin* to be converted into oil-burner at Balboa shipyard. Pay off crew in full and secure them transportation to New York. Retain master, chief mate, chief engineer, chief steward. Full instructions and specifications follow."

"That means that we'll haul out in the stream as soon as we finish discharging cargo," he mused, "and a shipyard gang will take us through the canal to Balboa. An oil-burner, eh? Well, we must keep up with the times, I suppose."

FOUR days later the *Penguin*, her cargo all out, was towed to an anchorage in the harbor. The crew had been paid off and were to leave for New York on a ship that was sailing later in the day. In the afternoon a shore boat took them, each with his dunnage, ashore. The chief engineer went along to check them aboard the steamer that was to take them to the States.

The *Penguin* was now like a dead thing; her boilers cold, her crew gone, she was not the live, pulsing ship she had been a few days ago. Those who were left aboard felt suddenly lonely. They were glum and silent when they sat down that evening to eat the dinner the steward placed for them on one end of one of the long tables in the dining saloon.

The chief engineer came back from ashore and took his place across from the captain at the table.

"Did you get them aboard all right?" asked Captain Mac.

"All but three. The —— gorillas. Guess I did pretty good at that," answered the chief.

"All but three, eh?"

"Yeah, three of the pierhead-jumpers I signed on at the last minute in New York. They got away from me in Cristobal and beat it across the railroad tracks into Colon. They're beachcombers at heart anyway, those three bums. They loafed all the way down, and we had to boot 'em into the fireroom in time for every watch. That's how those two happened to see that schooner—they were loafing on the topside. That was only a stall about trimming the ventilators."

"Oh, were they two of them?"

"Sure. And the other one is the gink who said he was in the washroom. He was probably snooping around the passenger quarters, looking for something to steal."

"H'mm!" murmured Captain Mac.

So the three pierhead-jumpers were the same three who had seen the topsail schooner, and they preferred to remain in Colon rather than go as passengers to New York, at the company's expense. This knowledge started a new chain of reasoning.

When specie is to be shipped, the information as to its route and time of shipment is kept secret as long as possible. Advance information is not easily to be got; and the specie thieves who stole the *Penguin's* gold must have watched every ship-sailing for weeks. The three firemen, reasoned the captain, were doubtless members of the gang. The three men whose places they had taken had been bribed to stay ashore, or waylaid, or given drugged hootch to drink in some speak-easy. This had been done as soon as the gang learned that the specie was to be shipped in the *Penguin*, and the three firemen members of the gang had waited on the wharf to take their jobs when the call should go out for pierhead-jumpers, as it was bound to do. These three men, then, were members of the gang.

And Taber—

The chief engineer here broke in on the captain's thoughts.

"That grumpy big passenger they took off here as a material witness—what was his name? Taber? That's him. Well, I saw him on Front Street this afternoon."

"You did!"

"Yep. He was strutting along like he owned the town. I didn't speak to him. I wonder how he got out? I guess they couldn't get anything on him, or else he's got friends higher up. Funny how he had his nose in everything that happened. He stands in with the cops, anyhow, whoever he is."

Captain Mac started. Sudden understanding flashed to him. Taber! The three firemen! Donohue's refusal to tell who Taber was! He had it now—no, there was a link still missing. Several links, in fact. Who killed Kelly, for instance? And who—

"Say, Cap'n, where'd you get that stunt?" asked the chief, looking wide-eyed across the table.

"Eh?"

"Where'd you get the idea of putting red pepper in your coffee?"

"Oh—I—I do that sometimes, Mr. Barnes," answered the captain weakly.

But it seemed that the little man did not care for his coffee, after all, and left without drinking it.

"Queer duck, the Old Man," commented the chief, to Mr. Shattuck, who had been listening but saying nothing.

"Yeah."

"A bad *hombre* to run afoul of, though," said the chief, shaking his head. "I was talking about him today to Donohue, the detec—"

"Donohue?" Shattuck looked up quickly. "Where is Donohue?"

"He's staying at the Washington Hotel, waiting for that fellow Shapiro to get well enough to talk."

"How is Shapiro?"

"He was pretty bad, but he's getting better now, Donohue says. That little butcher who was always asking fool questions, he's at the Washington, too."

"Is he?" Shattuck seemed to have lost interest. "Well, it's a nice place to stay, the Washington. Better than this blasted ship, that's sure."

CAPTAIN MAC spent at least an hour in the main deck alleyway by the specie-locker. He sat there on a box, rolling and smoking brown-paper cigarets and thinking, fitting new links to the chain his mind was forging, till the sun went down and the swift tropic night came. Then he rose and went above. There was a buoyancy in his step now, and a sparkle in his eyes. The chain was nearly complete, even to the explaining of the mysterious disappearance of the schooner.

The generators not being run, the ship was now forced to rely on oil lamps for illumination. The storage battery lighting system was to be used only in an emergency. Mr. Shattuck had hung an oil lantern over the stern and was now running another up on the jack-staff halliards forward. Satisfied that the lantern was secure and burning properly, he came upon the fore deck and called up to Captain Mac, on the bridge—

"You don't mind if I go ashore now, do you, Cap'n?"

"Certainly not. Go ahead, Mister. Are you going near the Washington Hotel?"

"Well, I can, if you want me to."

"I wish you would. I want you to deliver a letter for me to Donohue, the company detective."

"All right, Cap'n," said Shattuck willingly; then, "I suppose we'll go to the coal dock first thing in the morning to discharge our bunker coal?"

"Most likely. They'll have to get the coal out of her before they take her in the shipyard. We'll probably go to the coal dock about six o'clock."

"That's what I thought, sir. Well, I'll be back aboard in plenty of time."

A half-hour later Mr. Shattuck, with the chief steward, went overside, down the Jacob's ladder and into the small motor boat made fast at the bottom. Mr. Shattuck started the engine and took his place beside the tiller.

"You won't forget my letter, Mister?" called the captain from the wing of the bridge.

"No, sir. I'll deliver it," answered the big mate as the boat sheered out from the ship's side and headed for the Cristobal docks.

Captain Mac brought a deck-chair out upon the bridge deck and began to roll and smoke cigarets. The chief engineer came up after a while and perched on the rail with his back against the weather-cloth.

"They've offered ten thousand dollars reward for the arrest of the gang and the recovery of the gold," he said. "And the company has offered five thousand for the man who murdered Kelly. It's in the papers."

"H'mm! Well, that's all right!"

"Yeah, for whoever gets it. D'you think anybody ever will?"

"I certainly do!"

"Well, maybe. It won't be you or me, though, Cap'n."

"H'm," answered the captain.

Mr. Barnes went below to his room about eleven o'clock but Captain Mac remained in his deck chair upon the bridge. Colon Bay was gray with moonlight. Once the captain heard the *put-put* of a motor, and saw a small boat headed across the bay. He looked at it through the binoculars, but it wasn't the boat he was expecting. The boat he was waiting for would contain men in khaki and wide-brimmed hats—Canal Zone police.

"Now what's wrong with that Donohue?" he muttered, glancing at his watch. "Didn't he get my note?"

MIDNIGHT came, and still Donohue did not show up with the police. One o'clock, two o'clock, then there came the sound of a motor boat putting out from the shore. It was headed for the *Penguin*, and soon Captain Mac saw through the binoculars that there were five men in it. He could not distinguish their features, but he could tell by their dress that they were not policemen. The boat's motor was stopped when the craft was about two hundred yards off. Oars were put out and the boat pulled quietly to the ship. It was made fast to the Jacob's ladder and the five men, making as little noise as possible, came up one by one, and Captain Mac heard them coming along the saloon deck toward the ladder that led up to the promenade deck and the bridge.

He slipped into his room, snatched a loaded revolver from the shelf above his berth, and returned to the bridge. The first of the men was already on the starboard ladder, coming up. The captain turned quickly to the port ladder, went halfway down, and crouched there.

He saw the five men, shadows in the gloom beneath the bridge awning, go to his door, softly open it, and peer in, while one of them flashed a light.

"He's not here," said a low voice. "That's funny!"

"Maybe he went ashore," said another.

"M'mm, maybe."

"Or he might be hiding somewhere aboard."

"No, I don't think so," said the first voice. "I guess he went ashore, looking for Donohue."

"Yeah, I guess he did. We'd better make it snappy. Come on."

Captain Mac swiftly descended the ladder to the promenade deck, entered the social hall and went down the companionway to the saloon deck, and ran aft to the ladder that led down to the main deck passageway, where he paused. He could hear the men coming along the other side of the deck. He leaped down the inclosed ladder and went quickly along the passageway to the place where the thwartship alley intersected it. The crew's gangway door was open, and the passage was lighted dimly with moonlight. There were a number of oil barrels at one side, and he slipped behind two of them and crouched low.

The five men came through the alleyway from the other side of the ship, and halted at the bunker plate a few yards from the door of the specie-locker.

"I'll go for'rd and get a light tackle," said one, "and we'll hook it to a beam and haul 'em up, one by one."

"That's right." This voice carried a note of authority. "The rest of us will go down and roll 'em out under the hole."

The bunker plate was lifted off and the four men followed one another into the hole, their shoes clanging faintly on the iron rungs of the ladder as they descended.

Captain Mac chuckled to himself. He started from behind the barrels, but the thud of a boat's nose against the ship's side caused him to pause. He ducked swiftly back into concealment. Some one was coming up the Jacob's ladder from overside.

The newcomer did not continue up to the open deck, but stepped into the gangway port, and for a few seconds was outlined against the sky. He stood there, bent forward, evidently listening. Then he came with long, silent strides to the bunker hole, where he stopped, bent low, and listened again. From below came the muffled voices of the four men.

The man straightened, and scratched his head in puzzlement. He looked slowly about him, till his gaze came to rest on an oil barrel that lay on its bilge. He gripped the barrel by both ends and tugged at it. It was apparently full, or nearly so, for it took all his strength to twist it about and start it rolling slowly toward the open bunker hole.

He checked the barrel as it neared the bunker hole, and seemed to compare the size of the circular opening with that of the head of the barrel. He gave a short, grunting laugh, then rolled the barrel so that one end partly covered the hole, and taking hold of the other end, heaved mightily.

A shout of inquiry came from below, but it was cut off as the barrel slid, tilted upright, and became tightly wedged in the hole, its bilge being just large enough to keep it from going through into the bunker.

"A perfect fit!" grunted the man.

Captain Mac had been watching all this with great interest. He remained quiet, waiting to see what next would happen.

The man suddenly swung about and faced the darkness forward. It was the man who had gone after the tackle returning. When he was about fifteen feet away he stopped suddenly and peered intently through the gloom at the man by the bunker hole. Something glinted dully in the latter's hand.

"Who is that?" demanded the man by the bunker hole.

"Who is who?" Me? I'm the mate. What I want to know is, who the —— are you?" He cautiously approached a few steps. "Oh! Taber! Now what the—Say, what the —— are you doing aboard here?"

"Never mind. I want to know what you're doing up so early in the morning, Shattuck. I want to know what your business is."

"Oh, you do! Well, you got a lot of crust, asking me what *my* business is. My business is being mate of this ship, that's what it is. We're going alongside the coal docks in a few hours, and I got up early to rig some of the life boats in."

CAPTAIN MAC, behind his barrel, was throbbing with excitement. Here was another link in the chain. Shattuck! He also had come aboard the ship shortly before sailing. The other chief mate had been bribed to stay ashore, and to write the letter suggesting Shattuck as a substitute. Shattuck was a member of the gang!

"I'm mate of this ship," Shattuck was saying, "and it's my job to be up and about when there's work to be done, whether it's early in the morning or early in the night. Now, how about *you?*"

"Hr-rumph!" grunted Taber; and then, after some thought. "Well, I guess that's all right. I'll tell you who I am! I'm a government detective. We heard there was a plot to steal that specie, and the case was given to me. I guess you've heard of me. My name's Doyle, Nelson Taber Doyle." There was a note of pride in his voice. "They call me 'Blacky' Doyle."

"O-oo—" Shattuck let the tackle he had been carrying slip from his shoulder to the deck. "Blacky Doyle! Yeah, sure, I heard of you."

"I guess most everybody's heard of me," said the big man proudly. "That's why I can't travel under my right name. I always work alone. Donohue knew who I was, but I made him promise to keep his mouth shut. Donohue's a well-meaning sort of a fellow,

but he's dumb—he almost spilled the beans a couple of times.

"I was working on this case all the way down from New York," he went on. "They kind of put it over on me there in Port-au-Prince, though. While I was keeping tabs on the leader, the rest of the gang was down below getting away with the gold. But I just kept after the leader—I knew he'd lead me to it after a while. I admit I fell for that stall about the schooner, but I wasn't the only one."

"What d'you mean—stall?"

"Why, don't you see? There wasn't any schooner. That was just a story they made up to throw us off the track. They just rolled the kegs along the deck and let 'em drop into this reserve coal bunker, then put the cover on. And then when they came out tonight, I'm right behind them in another boat. I was puzzled at first, but when I found out that they were down in the bunker, why, I simply put that barrel over it. Ha-ha! Wasn't that rich?"

"Yeah, that's rich," agreed Shattuck, stepping closer to Doyle.

"And the schooner gag—that was what I call clever—"

The big detective broke off in the middle of his sentence. He tugged at the revolver he had replaced in his pocket.

"You said you saw the schooner too—"

He had the weapon half out, but he was too slow. Shattuck had started a swing with a limp black object that he had taken from his pocket. The blow seemed no more than a slap, yet Doyle went down as if he had been hit with a capstan-bar. Shattuck did not attempt to strike again. He knew that another blow was unnecessary.

"Sure I said I saw the schooner," muttered Shattuck, looking contemptuously down at the unconscious detective. "Did you just think of that? You're a fine dick, you are, you big mutt!"

The mate had struck so swiftly that Captain Mac had not had time to interfere. Revolver in hand, he now rose from behind the barrel. Shattuck had his back turned, and was tugging at the oil barrel wedged in the bunker hole. The little captain walked quietly to him and put the revolver against his side.

"We won't take that barrel out of there yet, Mister," he said calmly.

Shattuck jumped, then caught himself and half-turned.

"Oh, is that you, Cap'n?" he said. "You frightened me. I just caught this guy here snooping around, and when I asked him what he wanted—"

"Cut it!" snapped Captain Mac. "I've been watching and listening for half an hour. I know all about you."

Shattuck sidled closer. The revolver was pressed against his side. It was held awkwardly, stiff-armed. Had the captain known more about firearms, he would have stood off at a little distance. Shattuck wisely surmised that he was dealing with a man who knew little about the handling of a revolver.

"Well, then," he said, assuming a beaten air, "I guess the game's up. You got me, Cap'n—"

He swung quickly. His fist struck the captain's wrist and sent the revolver spinning off in the darkness. He swung again, this time for Captain Mac's jaw.

BUT Captain Mac was in his own element now. He was much more dangerous without a weapon than with one. He stepped inside the arc of Shattuck's swing, and his own right fist dug into the big mate's stomach and continued on up till it crashed against his chin. Shattuck's head went back as a short hook caught him on the side of the jaw and spun him half around. He fell on his side on the deck, and rolled over quickly to get clear. Captain Mac leaped after him, but tripped on the tackle, and by the time he had kicked himself free of the entangling rope and blocks the mate had gained his feet and had his blackjack in his hand. Cautiously, feinting for an opening to land his wicked weapon, he came toward the little captain.

Captain Mac made as if to spring, drew quickly back, let the mate's swing go by, and chopped down with his fist at the side of the other's neck. The mate swung backhanded, and the blackjack slashed across the captain's face.

One side of Captain Mac's mouth lifted in a leering fighting smile. He worked in close to the mate, and his lean body seemed to be made of steel springs as he bent and twisted, ducked or rolled with the big man's frantic blows. His fists swung and jabbed and hooked at a dazzling speed, and each blow was directed at a vulnerable spot.

Shattuck now knew that he was up

against a past master in the art of rough-and-tumble fighting. Try as he would, he could not land his blackjack squarely. The little man moved too fast, struck too quickly, and always the mate's heavy swings were a fraction of a second too late. One moment Captain Mac was out of reach, then he was to one side, or in close, driving short shock punches to the mate's heart or chin.

A gash had been opened above the mate's eyes, and the blood partly blinded him. He began to back, bent low, his left arm protecting his face and his right hand still gripping the blackjack. His heels struck something and a quick glance told him it was Captain Mac's revolver.

"All right, Cap'n, I quit," he grumbled.

Captain Mac nodded shortly and stepped back.

Shattuck tossed his blackjack to the deck, pulled out a handkerchief, dabbed at his bleeding forehead, and let the handkerchief fall, seemingly by accident, to the deck. He cursed, stooped as if to recover the handkerchief, and as he straightened he had in his hand the captain's revolver.

He fired from the hip, but missed, and aimed to fire again. Captain Mac leaped to one side, then to the other. A bullet ricocheted off a beam and sang wickedly past his head. He dove for the oil barrels along the side of the passageway, but realizing that they offered only temporary protection, he swung about with the intention of throwing himself headlong at the man with the revolver.

Shattuck leveled his weapon and sighted calmly. Then, as his hand squeezed the grip, a shot crashed from the open gangway port.

Shattuck's shot went wild. He clapped a hand to his hip, darted a glance toward the port, then turned and started at a shambling run in the other direction.

"Don't run, you —— murderer!" cried a voice. "Stand still, or I'll shoot your legs from under you!"

Shattuck stopped. One leg buckled under him and he fell upon his side.

"Donohue!" cried Captain Mac. "What are you doing here? I sent you a note, but I know now that Shattuck didn't deliver it."

"I just came from the hospital, and I've had a talk with Shapiro. He's dying, and he confessed. He's one of the gang. Shattuck killed Kelly, thinking he was alone, then tried to kill me when I got too close on his trail. Where's Taber?"

"He's been asleep," answered the captain. "Shattuck put him asleep with a blackjack. But he's coming out of it now."

Two Canal Zone policemen had come through the port after Donohue. One of them bent over Shattuck.

"Broken hip, I think," said the policeman, straightening. "But don't worry, old-timer, you'll live to hang."

Captain Mac turned to Donohue.

"But who stabbed Shapiro? Shattuck was in the room with us."

"I know it. That was an accident, Shapiro's being stabbed. Shattuck wanted to get rid of the knife, so he snapped out the light, grabbed his knife and threw it out the window. Shapiro was outside lookin' in, and the knife struck him in the throat. It was a big heavy knife, you know."

The captain quickly told Donohue of what had happened aboard ship.

Donohue nodded.

"I kind o' figured the gold was still aboard here when I saw the gang start out. All day I've been watching them and waiting for the doc in the hospital to send me word that Shapiro could talk. When the gang started out, Taber came after them, and I hung around the hospital. Taber was so darn bull-headed that he wouldn't take any cops with 'im—said he couldn't wait for 'em, and anyway, he said he always works alone. Smart onion."

Captain Mac picked up the tackle that Shattuck had brought from forward, and hooked it in a beam over the barrel. A rope strap was passed around the barrel and the tackle hooked to it, then the four men tailed onto the running part and heaved, lifted the barrel out of the bunker hole and swung it clear.

Out of the hole came three men. They were the three firemen who had said they saw the schooner, the gray topsail schooner that had been merely an invention of their leader's mind. They were grimy with coal-dust and sweat, and all were breathing hard, for they had been hanging to the vertical iron ladder and straining to shove the oil barrel out of the hole. They lined up, silent, downcast, and were disarmed and handcuffed by the two policemen.

"There's another one still down there," said Captain Mac.

Donohue grinned.

"Sure, I know it." He shouted into the bunker, "Come on, you. We know you're there."

Feet sounded on the ladder. A head appeared, then shoulders, and out of the bunker climbed little Dumphries.

"Well, gentlemen, and here we are!" he said.

He looked at Doyle, who was grumpily nursing his aching head.

"O-ho!" he said. "So you *are* a dick, after all. I suspected you at first, but later I thought I was mistaken, especially when I lost track of you in Colon. Well," he pursed his lips, "the breaks were against me."

DONOHUE had his revolver trained on Dumphries' stomach.

"Hand over your gat, butt first," he ordered. "Be careful!"

Dumphries' gaze was level and calm as he looked at his captors, and he smiled as he took a small automatic from his pocket and handed it to Donohue.

"You worried me a lot, Donohue," he said. "We didn't know you were a detective till after—after somebody killed Kelly. And that 'somebody' was worried too, I can tell you! As a detective, you're like a bull in a china shop, but you manage to get where you are headed for."

"You're under arrest, Brooklyn Barney Scheff," said Donohue. "And I warn you that anything you say will be used against—"

"Just so! I'll say no more."

Captain Mac was staring wide-eyed.

"Do you mean to say this man is one of the gang?" he exclaimed.

"He's the leader," said Doyle. "He's one of the cleverest crooks in the world. I knew him by sight, but Donohue didn't, and I made him promise to lay off and not arrest him till I gave the word. I knew there was a gang, and wanted to bag 'em all. Scheff is the man Kelly sent for, and the steward went to Shattuck, who went off half-cocked. He thought Kelly was alone."

"Remember how Dumphries — Scheff, rather—climbed out the window when the steward was stabbed on deck? Well, he knew that Shattuck had thrown the knife out the window, and he guessed the rest. That's why he was in such a hurry to get out. He kicked the knife overboard."

"Well," said Captain Mac, "Dumphries is the last man I would have suspected of being a member of the gang. He was so good-natured, and timid."

"Humph!" snorted Doyle. "He's one of the cleverest crooks in the world, I tell you. He can play the part of a minister, or a banker, or a hard-working bookkeeper on a vacation just as well as he played the part of a retired butcher."

"It'll give me a rep, catchin' him," mused Donohue.

"Say," cut in Doyle, "I want to tell you right here and now that I'm in on that fifteen thousand reward."

"Kelly's family!" snapped Donohue. "The reward goes to Kelly's family. I got a better claim on the reward than anybody else, and Captain Mac's got a better one than you, so where do you come in?"

Donohue looked to Captain Mac for approval, and the little fighting man nodded vigorously.

"The reward goes to Kelly's family," repeated Donohue firmly.

"Well, that's all right," agreed the big detective after a moment's thought, and he growled, "I'm not a bad guy."

The three firemen and Scheff were ordered into the largest of the three boats. Shattuck, his hip broken by Donohue's shot, was helped down to them. One of the policemen followed. The other was to stay aboard to guard the three kegs of gold, still in the bunker, till they should be sent for.

Big Doyle paused with one foot on the Jacob's ladder.

"I still don't think you're much of a detective, Donohue," he growled, "but if I took hold of you I might be able to make something out of you. If you want a job, a real detective job, I can fix it up for you. Maybe you and I could pull some big stuff together. What d'you say?"

"Gosh, that's what I been wantin' for ten years," said Donohue joyfully. "I'll take you up on that."

They went down the Jacob's ladder and into the boat.

The policeman who was to stay aboard smiled to Captain Mac.

"Well, Cap'n, and what do *you* get out of it?" he asked.

"We-ell, I don't know," answered the little shipmaster, rubbing his cheek thoughtfully. "Darned if I know," he repeated, and grinned back at the policeman.

THE CAMP FIRE

A Meeting Place for Readers, Writers and Adventurers

Our Camp-Fire came into being May 5, 1912, with our June issue, and since then its fire has never died down. Many have gathered about it and they are of all classes and degrees, high and low, rich and poor, adventurers and stay-at-homes, and from all parts of the earth. Some whose voices we used to know have taken the Long Trail and are heard no more, but they are still memories among us, and new voices are heard, and welcomed.

We are drawn together by a common liking for the strong, clean things of out-of-doors, for word from the earth's far places, for man in action instead of caged by circumstance. The *spirit* of adventure lives in all men; the rest is chance.

But something besides a common interest holds us together. Somehow a real comradeship has grown up among us. Men can not thus meet and talk together without growing into friendlier relations; many a time does one of us come to the rest for facts and guidance; many a close personal friendship has our Camp-Fire built up between two men who had never met; often has it proved an open sesame between strangers in a far land.

Perhaps our Camp-Fire is even a little more. Perhaps it is a bit of leaven working gently among those of different station toward the fuller and more human understanding and sympathy that will some day bring to man the real democracy and brotherhood he seeks. Few indeed are the agencies that bring together on a friendly footing so many and such great extremes as here. And we are numbered by the hundred thousand now.

If you are come to our Camp-Fire for the first time and find you like the things we like, join us and find yourself very welcome. There is no obligation except ordinary manliness, no forms or ceremonies, no dues, no officers, no anything except men and women gathered for interest and friendliness. Your desire to join makes you a member.

DURING our discussion of the Hough-Henry matter one comrade, who had not known or chanced to hear of Jesse Chisholm, used his name in a supposititious generality that seemed only such to us without any direct reference to Jesse Chisholm. But some of you seem to have made a different interpretation and have risen stanchly in Jesse Chisholm's defense.

I do not think that, among those who knew him, he needs any defense, but I certainly do not want to leave uncorrected any false impression that may have arisen from anything printed in our magazine. Perhaps the quickest way to remove any such impression is to give first a letter from Joseph B. Thoburn, secretary of the Oklahoma Historical Society, who, as he himself states it, is not a party to any controversy in this matter and is merely interested in the correct statement of facts as they were. As you will see from his letter, he is not acquainted with Camp-Fire's custom of hearing opinions on all sides of a question, listening to them as opinions only and forming its final judgment after consideration of all of them.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

My attention has just been called to the communication of W. F. G. in the "Camp-Fire" of November 20th, 1924, in which the writer asserts, without

corroborating evidence that one John S. Chism, of Denton County, Texas, was the originator of the Chisholm Trail and not Jesse Chisholm, who has long been credited with having left his name to that famous wilderness highway. Since you have given place to this direct, definite statement, unsupported by evidence of any sort to substantiate it, will you kindly permit, by way of reply, a very brief outline of the earlier history of the Chisholm Trail and the means by which it came to be so named?

IN THE latter part of the spring of 1861 the Federal garrisons of Fort Smith (Ark.) and of Forts Washita, Arbuckle and Cobb (Ind. Ter.) abandoned those posts when threatened with attack of superior forces of the seceding States. The Fort Smith garrison marched to Fort Washita. Thence the two united marched up the valley of Washita River to a point opposite Fort Arbuckle, where the garrison of that post joined the column. Continuing its march toward the northwest, it halted near the site of the present town of Minco, in the northern part of Grady County, until the arrival of the garriosn of Fort Cobb. The entire force was under the command of Col. Wm. H. Emory, who employed Black Beaver, a very noted Delaware Indian leader, to guide the column through to its destination at Fort Leavenworth. The route traversed was in a direction slightly east of north. It crossed the Arkansas River at the mouth of the Little Arkansas, where the city of Wichita, Kansas, has since been built.

During the Civil War the Indians of the Wichita, Caddo and affiliated tribes lived at the mouth of the Little Arkansas as refugees, as they had adhered to the Union at the outbreak of that struggle. With them lived Jesse Chisholm, a mixed-blood trader, a Cherokee by birth but a member of several other tribes by adoption. A more honorable and upright man never won and held the confidence and respect of every one who knew him or with whom he had dealings. In the early spring of 1865, when it was apparent that the great war was drawing to a close, Jesse Chisholm and James R. Mead, a white trader, loaded their wagons with goods for the Indian trade and started for the Washita country on a trading expedition. In doing so, they merely followed the faint traces of the trail made by the column of retreating Federal troops, nearly four years earlier. Other traders afterward followed the same road, which they called "Chisholm's Trail." This was in the spring of 1865—more than two years before the first herd of cattle was driven through from Texas to Abilene.

WHILE W. F. G. is doubtless honest and sincere in his belief that John S. Chism (or Chisholm, for that was his real name, protests to the contrary notwithstanding) drove the first herd through to Abilene, it is at variance with the facts. There are hundreds of others who think as he does—all upon the same hearsay evidence. The cattle trail from Texas to Abilene was the realization of a dream of one Joseph G. McCoy, an Illinois cattle feeder. Fifty years ago, McCoy published a book in which he told the details of the ealrly history of the Overland cattle trade. In this book, "Sketches of the Cattle Trade of the West and Southwest," on page 51, appears the following statement:

"The first herd that arrived at Abilene was driven from Texas by a Mr. Thompson, but sold to Smith, McCord & Chandler, Northern men in the Indian Nation, and by them driven to Abilene. However, a herd owned by Colonel O. W. Wheeler, Wilson and Hicks, all Californians, *en route* for the Pacific States, was stopped about thirty miles from Abilene for rest and, finally disposed of at Abilene, was really the first herd from Texas and broke the trail, followed by other herds."

In addition to the foregoing evidence, I have the word of the late W. P. Addington, of Oklahoma City, who, year after year, drove the Chisholm Trail himself, and who was a friend and neighbor of John S. Chisholm, that the latter had nothing whatever to do with the naming of the Chisholm Trail. Moreover, I have in my possession a letter from the late Colonel C. C. Slaughter, dean of trail drivers, in which he states very positively that the Trail was named for Jesse Chisholm. I have no desire to take issue with people from Texas who are mighty fine folks and who know, or ought to know, about such matters, but this is one in which Oklahoma history is at least as much concerned as Texas history is and, in its last analysis, the facts must be determined upon credible evidence rather than hearsay, however popular and long current the latter may be.—JOSEPH B. THOBURN, Secretary, Oklahoma Historical Society.

LEST there should be any doubt of the intended meaning of the original statements, the meaning which we in the office got from them, the maker of the statements himself comes forward to wipe out any other interpretation that may have been made:

Paris, Texas.

I have been informed that certain statements made in an article in your magazine printed during the course of the Hough-Henry discussion have been taken as a reflection upon a real "Jesse Chisholm."

Will you kindly make known the fact that in writing this article nothing of the kind was intended. The Jesse Chisholm of the book seemed to me of the same class as *Tasie Lockhart*, *McMasters*, *Jim Nabours* and others appearing in the book—that is, people who were created by Hough for the purposes of the book. Lockhart, McMasters, and Nabours are all Texas surnames, but I never considered that Hough was using these names as denoting real people or for the purpose of introducing real people either from Texas or the Indian Territory into a work of fiction.

I regret very much that application of anything in the article has been made to a real person—of whose existence I was unaware—and thereby the feelings of others hurt. There was certainly neither intent or purpose to cast reflections upon any real person and I trust no one will again use any thing in the article in this way, because it was not written with any real person in view, but dealt with the characters of the book as unreal and creations of the author.—W. F. G.

READ the following from a comrade, himself an old-timer of the West, who knew Jesse Chisholm intimately and prized his friendship:

Carthage, Missouri.

Jesse Chisholm, for whom the trail was named,

was born in the year 1778, in the old Cherokee country in East Tennesee. His father, Ignatius Chisholm, son of John D. Chisholm, the last hereditary chief of the Cherokees, was of Scotch descent and was a half-brother of the maternal grandfather of ex-United States Senator Robert L. Owen. His mother was a member of the noted Rogers family of the Cherokee Nation and an older sister of Tiana Rogers, the Cherokee wife of General Sam Houston.

JESSE CHISHOLM was one of the most interesting characters on the Western frontier for thirty years before his death. He came West at an early age and joined the western Cherokees in Arkansas, his mother's brother, John Rogers, being one of the leading chiefs of that band. This was years before any of the Cherokees settled permanently in the Indian Territory and many years before the migration of the main body of the tribe from their old homes east of the Mississippi.

He was with the war-party of Tah-Chee or "Dutch," a noted Cherokee chief, on its expedition against the Wacos on the Brazos in 1827. He was of venturesome disposition and lived for a time with the Cherokees of Texas. He was first mentioned as an interpreter by Colonel Henry Dodge of the U. S. Army on his visit to the village of Wichitas in 1834. In his later life he was said to be able to converse or talk sign with fourteen different tribes. Through the medium of sign language his services as an interpreter were frequently in demand by army officers and Indian service officials.

IN THE early 50s he had a trading-post not far from where the old California Trail crossed the South Canadian. Later on, prior to 1861, he had a ranch and trading-post at Council Grove, on the North Canadian a few miles west of the present Oklahoma City. He took little or no account of his hereditary tribe relationship, as he had been made an adopted member of the Wichita tribe.

When the Wichitas went north to Kansas at the beginning of the hostilities in 1861 Jesse Chisholm went with them. For more than six years the Wichitas remained encamped at the mouth of the Little Arkansas where the city of Wichita is now.

In the spring of 1865 Jesse Chisholm loaded several wagons at Leavenworth, Kansas, with goods and supplies and started on a trading expedition to the Wichita country. How thorough was his knowledge of the country between the Little Arkansas and the Washita and how unerring were his instincts as a path-finder and a trail-maker is shown by the fact that years later the engineers who surveyed the line for the Rock Island R. R. southward from Wichita seldom left the trail made by Jesse Chisholm more than a few hundred feet on either side. Such was the beginning of the historic Chisholm Trail.

A PORTRAIT made from a photograph taken of him at Leavenworth in the fall of 1866 shows him as being tired, worn out, sick and physically a mere shadow of the splendid man he had been a few years before. He had just returned from a long, hard trading trip. A year and a half later, April 4th, 1868, he died as the result of accidental poisoning at his trading-post on the North Fork of the Canadian of cholera morbus caused by eating bear's grease that had been poisoned by being melted in a brass-kettle.

One account has it that he was buried near the banks of the North Canadian in what is now Cleveland County, and another that he was buried near the North Canadian River in the northwest part of what is Blaine County. His grave is said to be unmarked. (Perhaps you can help us locate it.)

JESSE CHISHOLM was reputed to have been prudent and frugal in his habits as a trader and scrupulously honest in his dealings with other men whether white or Indian. Yet such was his charity and generosity that though he conducted a profitable business for years, he never amassed a great store of wealth. It was said of him that no man, be he white or red, ever came to Jesse Chisholm hungry and was not fed, or, naked, and was not clothed. He subscribed to no creed save that of an inherent love for his fellowman. That he died universally lamented by all the Indians who had known him and deeply mourned by his adopted fellow tribesmen of the Wichitas, Caddo and affiliated bands would scarcely state it all, for he had been a true friend and a loving brother, a wise counselor, a just and fair-minded arbiter and an honored patriarch among them during years which had been filled with sorrow and trouble.

Jesse Chisholm's Creed was: "Depart from evil and do good, Seek peace and pursue it." Or, in his own words:

"I don't know anything about the Bible, I don't take any stock in preachers, but the Great Spirit has implanted in every man's breast the knowledge of right and wrong. I never wronged any man. I have done good to my brethren all my life, and no man ever went from my camp hungry or naked. I have been a peacemaker among my brethren and I leave all of the future to the Great Spirit alone who sent me here."

The Old Chisholm Trail—and the story in all of its wealth of detail has not and never can be written. Its characteristic scenes are gone forever.—R. T. GREER.

IN ANOTHER letter from Mr. Greer is some information that all by itself establishes Jesse Chisholm solidly enough as the man after whom the famous trail was named:

I have just been informed by one of the committee appointed by the governor of the great State of Texas to investigate the matter of who it was that blazed the Chisholm Trail—whether it was Col. John S. Chisum or Jesse Chisholm. After thoroughly investigating the matter the committee have decided that that honor belonged to Jesse Chisholm of Indian blood and not to Col. John S. Chisum, American.

NOW that this matter is cleared up and Jesse Chisholm's real character and accomplishment set forth in unmistakable terms by those in position to know the facts, can we not go a little further and, as Mr. Greer suggests, see whether among us we can gather data that will locate definitely the final resting-place of this old-timer of the West who has sent his name down in the history of our country?

THERE is something interesting to add to our collection of information on the bow and arrow as a weapon. It becomes easy to realize, at least in a general way, what massed archers meant as riflemen, machine-gunners or even as artillery.

Washington, D. C.

One of your contributors asks some questions and gives some information about the release used by various archers, mentioning four different types as the number of possible variants. In addition to his four there are two others, one used by a tribe of Africans by which the whole hand is used in drawing the bow-string and the release accomplished with the aid of a U-shaped piece of thin board covering the palm, and the second a release used by the Turkish soldiers and apparently inherited from the professional soldiers of the Byzantine Empire. In this latter form the string is drawn without bending the fingers. The arrow lies across the first three fingers and is held by a silver or agate ring on the thumb, which is held tightly pressed against the base of the forefinger and the release is accomplished by spreading the thumb and fingers. According to Sir Ralph Payne Gallwey, who has made a study of the subject, this release gives an increased range of many yards in flight contests. Pope says his Indian used the Mongolian release.

According to the same authority the ranges obtained with the Turkish bow with flight arrows (not war arrows) are indeed remarkable. He quotes a verified record in London of 482 yards with records from contests in Constantinople marked by monuments on the archery grounds of from 625 to 800 yards. The Turkish bow was a very complicated affair. It had a wood core of three pieces with a strip of horn on the inside and the outside built up of small pieces of sinew held together by a flexible glue and then covered with a thin piece of leather or cherry bark. The string was of sixty strands of silk with sinew loops at the end. The bow itself was reflex, that is, when unstrung it bent into a nearly complete circle in the reverse direction. The war bow had a pull as great as 160 pounds, although the usual pull was 118 for what he calls the light bow.

The English long-bow shot a heavier arrow with an extreme range of less than 400 yards (usually 300) but was far easier and cheaper to make and probably had as great hitting power at close ranges. I seriously doubt if it is possible to find any date for its introduction anywhere, as it is the natural development of the bow after its first discovery and use. Any boy who plays with the bow and arrow will develop it in a comparatively short time. Its advantage was its simplicity, and speed and ample hitting power at the battle-ranges of the day in which it was used. This hitting power is not now appreciated. Patritius, an early writer on military affairs, says of it: "An English arrow with a little wax put upon its head will pass through any ordinary corselet or cuirass."

Sir John Smith writing some time in the latter part of the sixteenth century is quoted as saying: "Archers, being good, direct their arrows with a great deal more certainty, being within eight . . . to eleven scores (of yards) than any musqueteers or harquebuseers (however good they may be) can do in a much nearer distance. I will never doubt to venture my life among eight thousand good archers . . . against twenty thousand of the best musqueteers."

The same authority says that the archers could stop armored mounted troops and that the arrows falling from above were nearly as effective as those at point-blank ranges, and describes the terrible effect of archery fire on attacking troops. He ascribes the superiority of the long-bow over the cross-bow to the speed attained in firing and consequent ability to smother the enemy's fire.

As an example take Crecy. The archers were drawn up in a "herse" (or hearse) or rather in two, one on each flank. This herse had a front of seventy or seventy-five men and a depth of forty men. Pope says he can fire the long-bow so that he has seven arrows in the air at one time and that he believes it possible for an especially skilled archer to have ten. The shaft is supposed to be three feet long. It would be quite possible then to fire twelve hundred lineal feet of arrow for each front man, say four feet of front, in fifteen seconds. All except the two front ranks would probably fire at an angle of 45 degrees to obtain a plunging effect. Apparently those ancient writers who wrote of the hail of arrows were right. Also consider that the average distance was less than 150 yards and the arrows were nail-headed, armor-piercing affairs that could be seen coming and yet not dodged.

I agree with Captain John Smith that it must have been hard on the nerves. One quite understands what happened.—Alfred Buehl.

State Highway Camp,
Erie, Michigan.

IN THE circumstances I think there can be no objection if this comrade's letter is heard without his name at the end of it. Here at the office all our spare copies and all our exchanges go to hospitals or prisons. It isn't much trouble or expense to do this. Why can't we all of us do it oftener?

I have had a longing to throw a stick into the Camp-Fire for a good many years, so hope you will let me sit in this once.

I read Mr. E. R. Parry's letter about placing a copy of the magazine under Tamerlane's tomb, but I placed or rather caused to be placed hundreds of copies in a living tomb—the State's prison at Jackson, Michigan.

When I was sentenced there three years ago there were but a very few magazines in circulation there, but, as I was given a job in the Chaplain's office and library, I persuaded the Chaplain to form a Magazine Club and to head the list with *Adventure* which has always been a favorite with me and, believe me, I devoured the first copy that came in.

I am out on temporary parole to the State Highway Department along with about 700 other men, earning $1.25 per day putting in concrete roads at a cost to the tax-payers that is at least 100% less than a private contractor would charge. I hope that the time will soon come when every man convicted of a crime in the United States will be given the same chances to make good that the Governor

of this State and warden Hulburt of Jackson have given these 700 men from the prisons of this State.

There is honor among thieves and Michigan is proving it every day. Men are men, even if they have traded their name for a number as I did in 1921. So in closing I will only sign my number which I wish you would omit. But in case any of my Camp-Fire friends have books that they are tired of, I know that two thousand men would thank them if they mailed them to the State Prison Library, care of Chaplain Wm. Hopp, Jackson, Michigan.—C. B. A.

ONCE a woman reader, a mother, protested against Gordon Young's use of the word "whore" in a story and I defended his use of it. He uses it again in the serial beginning in this issue, but the fact that this makes only twice in the eight years he has written for us seems sufficient proof that he uses it only when real need justifies.

In eight years of writing for *Adventure*, in writing of harsh hard men, and often of the women who entangle their lives, I have used the word but twice. It appears in "Days of '49," where I believe it is the only word under heaven that would make *Col. Nevinson* strike as he does the *Dona Elvira;* and that blow must be struck in just that way or the story falls. The sequence and plot follow that word and blow like a row of falling dominoes.

MORE perhaps than most persons, certainly far more than persons who do not write, I hesitate to use often the word "whore," because as it stands regarded now it is a word of power, imagery, finality; the language has too few of such Saxon vividity; strong, potent, vivid words by misuse and thoughtless frequency become futile, mere badinage: as "Hell" is now a word for vaudeville jokesters, and the once anathematic "damn" mere slang on a flapper's tongue.

REGARDING the opinion of your friend that too much attention is given in the story to women of ill-fame, I can only say that I deal always in complicated plots, usually of turbulent or at least emotional violence; but whoever will take the trouble to look closely at that sort of woman, when they appear, will *always* find that their purpose is that of a definite contrast. I think the preacher in that house of harlotry is probably the highest bit of drama I ever got to. One can't make a strong man convincing unless there is something against which he can pit his strength, or a man nobly convincing unless he towers above the ignoble. San Francisco, and California of that day, was a land of such black-white contrasts. Take a specific and obvious instance as when the miner is having his leg cut off in *Mrs. Gubbin's* cabin, and she, the noblest of pure pioneer women, stands unshrinking before an operation at which the doctor shrinks—all this, while, from afar through the night may be heard the revelry with the other sort of women. Those women are there (though they of course have their minor plot-places, worked in to seem to justify their presence) not to show themselves, but to show the character of *Mrs. Gubbins* through whom I tried to pay a fitting tribute to the women—"our kind of women," as the miner calls them—of '49.

People who read, or at least most of them, don't seem to realize that we who write—nearly all writers, except youngsters who soon learn to do likewise—plan, rewrite, change this, build up that, work for carefully designed effects; and, whether or not these effects are pleasing or displeasing, they are not obtained by accident or "inspiration." One reader may not like this aspect of a story, another that; and in so far as this or that aspect fails to please any particular reader, though it be impossible to please all, difficult to please many, the writer has failed of his purpose and must accept blame. He must stand or fall by what he has succeeded in doing, not by what he has tried to do; he must use what judgment he has, but accept the reader's decision as final—however much he may choose to solace himself with such little phrases as "being too good for the public," and "going over the heads of the groundlings."—GORDON YOUNG.

AS THE former occasion brought only many letters endorsing the magazine's attitude on the use of the word in question, and as *Adventure* has through its nearly fifteen years of existence steadfastly proved its clean intent, no repetition of the defense seems necessary on its second occurrence beyond stating our general position that lip-morality and real cleanness do not always coincide and that ignorance and ignoring do not create or safeguard cleanness.

As to having such women appear at all in "Days of '49." This is a story of California in the mad, wild days of the gold-rush. They were part and parcel of life in that time and place. No picture ignoring them can be complete or real, for they were woven almost inextricably into all the threads of existence and occupied no background position. Under Mr. Young's handling they are merely part of the setting and minor cogs in the machinery of the story's development. If under his handling they had even once been presented with a figurative smacking of lips or squint of eye, if they had even once been given place for their own sake, if Mr. Young had anywhere failed to handle them with utter cleanness, this story would not have reached you in its present form. But you have never known Mr. Young to smudge a story with sex-appeal and he does not do so in this one.

There are good women, too, in this story, and somewhat more of love-interest than is usually found in our fiction. As you know, women of any kind and the love-element play small part in our pages. So far as possible we avoid stories containing

any considerable amount of these elements, but sometimes there comes a story like "Days of '49" that you would not be at all willing to lose because of their presence in it. Also, stories constantly ignoring the existence of one-half the population would become a bit monotonous—and unreal. And Mr. Young's story is too living and powerful a picture of one great stage in our country's development——

I can't go on. It is to laugh. It is pleasantly amusing that an editor should feel a need—and there is a need—of apologizing for what is really a very, very moderate dose of entirely respectable women in one story in his magazine. It is amusing, also, though not so pleasantly so, that *Adventure*, which has always kept itself wholesome and decent, should feel called upon to defend the entirely non-salacious appearance of some non-respectable women in one of its stories, while into our best homes is freely received, through most of our "best" magazines, fiction written largely by this recipe: "For nine-tenths of the story entertain the reader with a girl's adventures in the sex game and then in the hurried remaining tenth register high morality by showing that by the skin of her teeth she got away with it and didn't fall after all."

Those other magazines that brazenly make plain their sex-appeal and depend almost wholly upon it for their sale are at least honest. They are not hypocritical, do not enter the home in moral disguise to teach immorality. But our "best" magazines, many of them—bah! An *Adventure* writer may use the word "whore" twice in eight years but there are no *Adventure* writers doing wholesale pandering for pay or subtly—or otherwise—broadcasting lax sex morality at so much per broadcast.

It is a shame that "Days of '49" should be introduced with any such discussion, the whole sex question being so very minor a matter so far as it is concerned. I'm not given to praising our stories at Camp-Fire, but here is one built on so big a scale that sex and the above discussion of it will be forgotten in the reading.

And we're trying an experiment. It's customary for our writers, in the case of a story with historical setting, to give Camp-Fire an idea of the actual facts upon which it is based, pointing out deliberate variations for fiction purposes. In this case Gordon Young has gone further and gives not only the particular reference but many quotations that enlarge and make more vivid our picture of the times. They are, properly, definite foot-notes to the text but, rather than impede the flow of the story, we have them at Camp-Fire instead, so far as space permits. You can read them before or after the story according to your taste in such matters. They will, I think, be found more interesting if read afterward and will not then betray any of the story's plot in advance.

PART I—CHAPTER I

Dr. Brooks was in San Francisco when the first news of the gold discovery reached the city and left at once for the mines. He kept a diary.—"Four Months Among the Gold-Finders." By J. Tyrwhitt Brooks. London. 1849.

The precise date of the gold discovery is unknown: "Marshall himself was uncertain about the exact date. At various times he gave three different dates—the 18th, 19th and 20th, but never moved it along as far as the 24th. In the past thirty years three different dates—the 18th, 19th and 24th—have been celebrated as the anniversary of Marshall's gold discovery. The evidence upon which the date was changed to the 24th is found in an entry in a diary kept by W. H. Bigler, a Mormon, who was working for Marshall on the millrace at the time gold was discovered. The entry reads 'January 24. This day some kind of metal that looks like gold was found in the tailrace.' On this authority about ten years ago the California Pioneers adopted the 24th as the correct date of Marshall's discovery."—"A History of California." By J. M. Guinn. 3 vol. Los Angeles. 1915. p. 157.

"Doctor Sandels, a very able mineralogist. . . . Seeing him so much interested in minerals, and so unwearied in his researches thereabout, Sutter said to him one day, 'Doctor, can you not find me a gold mine?' Placing his hand upon the shoulder of his host, the Doctor replied, 'Captain Sutter, your best mine is in the soil. Leave to governments to provide the currency.' This was in 1843." p. 51.—"California Inter Pocula." By Hubert Howe Bancroft. San Francisco. 1888. p. 44 *seq.*

"Chemists, geologists, mineralogists, and old miners, have not done better than ignorant men and newcomers. Most of the best veins have been discovered by poor and ignorant men. Not one has been found by a man of high education as a miner, or geologist."—"The Resources of California." By John H. Hittell. San Francisco. 1869. p. 273.

Gillespie, a '49er, knew Marshall at Coloma, and one day while making a pencil sketch of the mill, Marshall came by, stopped and gave him an account of his experiences which were written down at the time by the artist.—"Marshall's Own Account of the Gold Discovery." By Charles B. Gillespie. *Century Magazine.* Vol. xlx.

"California Inter Pocula." p. 64.

"History of California." By Theodore H. Hittell. 5 vol. San Francisco. 1897. In vol. iii, Hittell quotes from Parson's *Life of Marshall.*

"In 1841 Marshal Soult, Minister of War under Louis Phillipe, appointed M. Duflot de Mofras, an eminent French Savant and diplomat, to make a

thorough exploration of California, and to prepare the way for France to acquire possession of the country. It is known that secret agents of that government resided in California from the time of M. de Mofras' visit until it fell into the hands of the United States."—"The Natural Wealth of California." By Titus Fey Cronise. San Francisco. 1868.

M. de Mofras reported that both England and the United States were plotting to obtain possession of California, and wrote a book to instruct French officers how best to accomplish the same object.

Also, "History of California." By Hubert Howe Bancroft. 7 vol. San Francisco. 1884-1890. Vol. iv has chapters on the plans of European countries to obtain possession of California.

"The Romance of the Age. By E. E. Dunbar. p. 29 *seq.*

"Diary of a Mormon in California." Mss. By W. H. Bigler. Cited by Eldredge in his "Beginnings of San Francisco."

"Of all plants, probably a youthful clergyman in a stormy climate is the most tender. . . . It was so in flush California. Hundreds of those who came hither fell, fell very low, lower than some who professed less. . . . Some on reaching California, sunk their reverend titles and turned gamblers. . . . So scores went down into the depths, and never after saw the light; often changing their names so that their friends should never again hear of them."—"California Inter Pocula," p. 798.

"It is a remarkable circumstance that out of a fleet of 760 vessels from American ports that sailed around Cape Horn to San Francisco in 1849-50, not one was wrecked or sustained any serious disaster on the long and tempestuous voyage. Yet this fleet was largely composed of old vessels that had long been regarded as unseaworthy, and in many instances had been condemned, but which had been patched up and pressed into service again to meet the exigencies of the occasion. Many and many a ship entered the Golden Gate with pumps which had been almost constantly manned to keep it afloat, and many and many instead of coming to anchor were run directly upon the mudflats of Mission Bay, where they ended their sea-going days by being transformed into storehouses, hotels, or boarding houses. . . . It is an interesting circumstance that every one of these vessels entered the harbor of San Francisco and found an anchorage without the aid of a pilot. It is none the less singular, perhaps, that not until after a pilot system was established was there a single wreck to record of vessels entering or attempting to enter the Golden Gate."—"Cape Horn and Co-Operative Mining in '49." By Willard B. Farwell. *Century Magazine.* Vol. xx.

"California Illustrated." By a Returned Californian. New York. 1853.

"At this time the cholera and Panama fever was raging in full force. The unacclimated Americans were dying in every direction."—"Adventures of a Forty-Niner." By Daniel Knower. Albany. 1894. p. 37.

In Panama—"Once seized with sickness and without a faithful comrade, a man's chance for recovery was small; for already a coating of callous indifference to the suffering of others seemed to be enclosing the hearts of many of these adventurers, and a pale fever-stricken stranger was too often shunned like a leper."—Bancroft's "California Inter Pocula." p. 186.

" . . . at one time more than 500 (vessels) could be counted. Possessed no less than the passengers by the gold fever, the crews rushed away at once, carrying off the ship boats." Bancroft's "History of California." Vol. vi. p. 167.

"The morning of our arrival, eighteen of her (*U. S. Ohio*) men had contrived to escape, carrying with them one of the boats, under fire of all the government vessels in the harbor."—"El Dorado. By Bayard Taylor. New York. 1850.

"The harbor presents for miles an unbroken forest of masts; ships from every country and nation lie here idle and worthless, with no prospect of ever leaving; many must go down at their anchor, for there are not enough men unemployed to work a twentieth part of them."—"Personal Adventures in Upper and Lower California. By William Redmond Ryan. 2 vol. London. 1852. p. 401.

"The prices of goods was so fluctuating that business was really a gamble. One week a staple article would soar 200 per cent. above its original selling price. The following week perhaps the same article could not be sold at any price because of a glutted market."—"California: Men and Events." By George H. Tinkham. Stockton. 1915. p. 116.

"Great quantities of goods were piled up in the open air, for want of a place to store them."—Taylor's "El Dorado." p. 55.

"Men dart hither and thither, as if possessed of a never resting spirit. You speak to an acquaintance—a merchant perhaps. He utters a few hurried words of greeting, while his eyes send keen glances on all sides of you; suddenly he catches sight of somebody in the crowd; he is off, and in the next five minutes has bought up half a cargo, sold a town lot at treble the sum he gave, and taken a share in some new and imposing speculation. It is impossible to witness this excess and dissipation of business, without feeling something of its influence. The very air is pregnant with the magnetism of bold, spirited, unweary action."—Taylor's "El Dorado." p. 114.

"When tobacco was down, a man desirous of building a house on made ground tumbled in boxes of it, enough to form a foundation. Before the house was built tobacco was $1 a pound, worth more than a dozen such houses. Wanting a cross walk one threw in a sack of beans, which shortly after were worth thirty cents a pound."—"California Inter Pocula." p. 349.

Bancroft in his "History of California," Vol. vi. p. 198, describes the building of a sidewalk out of tobacco, and says that barrels of beef, sacks of beans, tons of iron goods, were also used to fill up mudholes.

"More than one instance is recorded of property selling at $40,000 or more, which two years before cost fifteen or sixteen dollars. . . . Well known is the story of Hicks, the old sailor. The gold excitement recalled to his memory the unwilling purchase in Yerba Buena of a lot, which on coming back in 1849 he found worth a fortune. His son sold *half* of it some years later for nearly a quarter of a million."—Bancroft's "History of California." Vol. vi. p. 192.

"Lumber was then bringing $500 per thousand feet, and not long before it brought $1500."—Taylor's "El Dorado."

"Memoirs of Gen. William T. Sherman. 2 vol. New York. 1875. Vol. i. p. 67.

Bancroft's "History of California." Vol. vi. Footnote 27. p. 191.

The Parker House, hotel and gambling house, rented for $180,000 per year. Footnote 23. p. 188.

"California Inter Pocula." p. 666: "In 1849 almost every house and tent, public and private, received lodgers for pay. A regular lodging house consisted of one room, with shelf-like bunks ranged round its sides, each of which held a straw mattress reeking with filth and vermin, and a pair of musty blankets. Cots occupied the center of the room, and sleeping places were chalked out on the floor."

"California: Men and Events." p. 67.

"By the middle of 1849 lumber was $600 per 1000 feet and a brick house could be estimated at $1 for each brick."—Bancroft's "History of California." Vol. vii. p. 104

Ryan in his "Personal Adventures" (Appendix) reports: "Large quantities of soiled linen are sent to our antipodes to be purified. A vessel just in from Canton brought 250 dozen, which were sent out a few months ago; another from the Sandwich Islands brought 100 dozen; and the practice is becoming general."

The instance of a man in business in San Francisco in '49 who had had a partner for two months without learning his full name.—"Pioneer Times in San Francisco." By William Grey. (?) San Francisco. 1881. p. 85.

"This (The Hounds) was an organization of young men for the declared purpose of assisting each other in sickness, or when peril of any kind threatened any of its members. It had been imperfectly organized in the beginning of the year, and was virtually a gang of public robbers. The members assumed a kind of military discipline, under the guidance of regular leaders, who wore a uniform, and occasionally, but only on Sundays, paraded the streets with flags displayed and drum and fife playing. They attacked the tents of inoffensive people, chiefly foreigners, and if they could not extort money from the owners or inmates by threats, tore them to the ground, and stole or destroyed money, jewels, and everything valuable on the premises. These outrages, perpetuated usually at night, when the more peaceable citizens had retired to rest, were so frequent that the 'hounds' became a terror to all well-disposed people of the town. They invaded the stores, taverns, and houses of Americans themselves, and rudely demanded whatever they desired. . . . lately adopted the name 'Regulators,' committed the most violent and cruel outrages in open defiance of the law and common humanity."—Annals of San Francisco." New York. 1855. p. 227.

(The *Annals* were written and compiled from San Francisco newspapers and personal observation by men who had lived in the city during the time of which they wrote.)

Hittell's History of California." Vol. iii.

Bancroft's "History of California." Vol. vi. Footnote. p. 227.

Quoted in the "Autobiography of Charley Peters." Sacramento, N. D.

"The States Attorney of San Francisco states that in four years twelve hundred murders have been perpetrated, and only one of the criminals was convicted."—"The Land of Gold." By Hinton R. Helper. Baltimore. 1855. p. 253.

"From 1849 to 1854 inclusive, 4200 murders were committed in California. In San Francisco there were 1200 and only one conviction."—Bancroft's "History of California." Vol. vii. p. 215.

"Homicide was too common to excite much comment, and as almost no attempt was made to enforce the law by regularly appointed officials, men almost ceased to take it into consideration. Principals in a quarrel were shot or stabbed to death (and bystanders who failed to get out of the way quickly enough accidentally killed), without society holding any one responsible."—"History of California The American Period." By Robert Glass Cleland. New York. 1922. p. 294.

" . . . almost before the last throb of pulsation had beaten, and as the body still warm with animal heat, was being removed, the blood-stained villain (the gambler) audaciously resumed his position at his infernal altar, surrounded by an inhuman crowd, who pressed forward to the game, nowise constrained by the consciousness that they were standing in the undried gore of a fellow creature "—"An Excursion to California " 2 vol. By William Kelly. London. 1851. Vol. ii. p. 247.

"On the slightest occasion, at a look or touch, an oath, a single word of offense, the bowie knife leaped from its sheath, and the loaded revolver from the breast pocket or the secret case, and death or severe wounds quickly closed the scene. The spectators often shared in the same wild feelings, and did not always seek to interfere. The law was powerless to prevent such personal conflicts. Men thought as little of their blood and lives as of their money, and to gratify high swelling passions would readily waste them all alike."—"Annals of San Francisco." p. 356.

"Now and then the games were momentarily interrupted by the crack of a pistol, and the loungers became a little demoralized as the ball whistled past their ears and lodged in the wall. If a man was killed or wounded, he was taken out, but the nature of the affray was left to be learned from the morning papers, and in a few minutes all was as before."—"California Inter Pocula." p. 710

"Amidst all the din and turmoil of the crowd, and the noisy music that issues from every corner, two or three reports of a pistol will occasionally startle the stranger, particularly if they should happen to be in his immediate vicinity, and a bullet should (as is not uncommon) whistle past his head; and crack the mirror on the other side of him. . . . After the first discharge the excitement settles down and the suspended games are resumed."—"Mountains and Molehills." By Frank Marryat. New York. 1855. p. 45.

Lola Montez, Countess of Lanseldt, favorite of the King of Bavaria. She died wretchedly in a New York tenement house.

Chapter II

One paragraph, romantically fanciful as it may sound, is taken almost literally from the *Annals of San Francisco.*

Chapter III

"On the steamers coming out, the frail, fair one was often shown all the delicate considerations due to the fine lady of immaculate morals; the officers of the ship were always at her command, and if a favorite of the captain, she was assigned a seat at his table. On her arrival, merchants and judges were among her associates. There was little social caste or moral quality in those days. . . . . Later, families were brought out, virtue and domestic honor gained the ascendency, and indecency slunk away and hid itself."—"California Inter Pocula. p. 309.

CHAPTER IV

According to Dr. Knower in his "Adventures of a Forty-Niner," p. 146, the sort of speculation by which brokers kept the money received from the sale of goods consigned to them was not uncommon. He instances the case of one man who had about all the consignments of shipments from Liverpool to sell on a commission of ten per cent.; but instead of remitting the capital to the owners, and being satisfied with his commission, he used it in buying property and in erecting buildings in San Francisco. " . . . the great fire destroyed all of his buildings and he was a ruined man."

Helper in "The Land of Gold," p. 142, says that merchants swindled the consignors by keeping the money and writing that the goods were destroyed by fire.

CHAPTER V

Bancroft in "California Inter Pocula," p. 705 *seq.*, supplies this description with detail: "The character of the typical gambler of the flush times is one of the queerest mixtures in human nature. His temperament is mercurial but non-volatized. . . . Supreme self-command in his cardinal quality; yet, except when immersed in the intricacies of a game, his actions appear to be governed only by impulse and fancy. On the other hand his swiftest vengeance and cruellest butchery seem rather the result of policy than passion. . . . He is never known to steal except at cards; and if caught cheating he either fights or blandly smiles his sin away, suffers the stakes to be raked down without a murmur, treats good-humoredly, and resumes the game unruffled. United with the coolest cunning is the coolest courage. He is as ready with his pistol as with his tooth pick, but he never uses it unless he is right; then, he will kill a man as mercilessly as he would brush a fly from his immaculate linen. . . . He accustoms himself to go without sleep, and if necessary can go for several days and nights without rest. . . . He deals his game with the most perfect sang froid, and when undergoing the heaviest losses there is no trembling of fingers or change of expression. . . . His brightly polished weapons are always at his elbow ready for immediate use. . . . He is studiously neat in his habits, and tends to foppishness."

The rocker, or cradle, appeared at the mines within a few weeks after the discovery of gold. Its invention, or at least introduction, is credited to a Georgian miner who happened to be in the neighborhood. Hittell in his "Resources of California" describes it at length, p. 258 *seq.*: "It bears some resemblance in shape and size to a child's cradle, and rests upon similar rockers. The cradle-box is about forty inches long, twenty wide, and four high, and it stands with the upper end about two feet higher than the lower end, which is open so that the tailings can run out. On the upper end of the cradle-box stands a hopper or riddle-box twenty inches square, with sides four inches high. The bottom of this riddle-box is of sheet-iron, perforated with holes half an inch in diameter. The riddle-box is not nailed to the cradle-box, but can be lifted off without difficulty. Under the riddle is an 'apron' of wood or cloth, fastened to the sides of the cradle-box and sloping down to the upper end of it. Across the bottom of the cradle-box are two riffle-bars about an inch square, one in the middle, the other at the end of the box. The dirt is shoveled into the hopper, the 'cradler' sits down beside his machine, and while with one hand with a ladle he pours water from a pool at his side upon the dirt, with the other he rocks the cradle. . . . The man who rocks a cradle learns to appreciate the fact that the 'golden sands' of California are not pure sand, but are often extremely tough clay, a hopperful of which must be shaken about ten minutes before it will dissolve under a constant pouring of water. Many large stones are found in the pay dirt. Such as give an unpleasant shock to the cradle as they roll from side to side of the riddle-box are pitched out by hand, and after a glance to see that no gold sticks to their side, are thrown away; but the smaller ones are left until the hopperful has been washed, so that nothing but clean stones remain in the riddle, and then the cradler rises from his seat, lifts up his hopper, and with a jerk throws all the stones out. The water and the rocking are both necessary. Without the water, the dirt could not be washed; and without the rocking the dirt would dissolve very slowly, and the gold would most of it be lost. . . . The cradle is cleaned up two or four times in a day. The cleaning up is done by lifting the hopper, taking out the apron, scraping up all the dirt in the bottom of the cradle with an iron spoon, putting it into a pan, and washing out the dirt so that only the gold will be left. . . . The great difficulty in mining with the cradle, is that the sand will 'pack,' or make a hard mass on a level, and the gold then is lost. So long as the cradle is in motion the dirt does not pack, but when the rocking ceases, the mass hardens in a few minutes."—p. 258 *seq.*

A WORD from Stanton C. Lapham in connection with his story in this issue. He speaks a good word for the men who frequent the open places.

LaGrande, Oregon.

Out of years of experience and observation of men in the open places, it is my judgment that the most humane class of men in the world are among those who have hunted much, who love adventure, and have lived near to the heart of things in the great out-doors.—STANTON C. LAPHAM.

FOLLOWING Camp-Fire custom, Colonel Frank E. Evans rises to introduce himself on the occasion of his first story in our magazine. I had known him back around 1914 when we were both working in connection with the original American Legion, organized, as you will remember, by our Camp-Fire. Later I lived for nearly a year within about six inches of him without either of us knowing it. A New York apartment house.

You may remember that the Wilson administration did everything it could to blot out that American Legion of ours—called General Leonard Wood up on the carpet for backing us up to the fullest extent he could,

called off the staff officers he had assigned for almost full-time duty with us, called off Commander Crank who was actively working with us for the Navy, and of course refused all aid or sanction. At a time when the Army did not have even the addresses of the trained men it had discharged! A list of men trained in trades and professions needed in war-time was apparently unheard of; I drew up one to the best of my poor ability and several of General Wood's staff at Governor's Island took it and developed it into something worth while. I remember that the idea was so untried in our Army that these officers, to be sure of perfect accuracy, called in the non-coms. to be sure of such distinction as—I think I have it right—the difference between blacksmith and farrier. The Navy and Marine officers interested enlarged it to cover their arms of the service.

Our 25,000 members were cross-indexed according to their qualifications in that list as well as to firing-line experience or fitness. When, despite the active backing of ex-Presidents Roosevelt and Taft, Elihu Root, three ex-Secretaries of War and three of the Navy, the steady opposition of the Wilson administration finally stopped the growth of the Legion, it refused even to take over the valuable records and indexes of our membership. That valuable piece of machinery —which General Wood called the most practical step up to that time taken for national defense—had from the beginning been placed at Washington's disposal if only Washington would use and develop it, but most all the big influence back of us could accomplish was, after the Legion had ceased active work and only after repeated efforts, to get the Wilson administration to allow us to file our invaluable records away in some of their cellars or attics.

After we had been drawn into the war in the utterly unprepared condition the Legion had striven so hard to change, I learned by merest chance that our bureau at Washington had been working a hundred or two clerks for months on the Legion records as a means of getting hold of men for specialized needs and that three or four other bureaus were waiting their turns. Our Legion's work has proved a hundred times worth doing but it would have proved still a hundred times more valuable if Woodrow Wilson and Secretaries Daniels, Baker, Garrison *et al.* had helped it to a natural development during four precious years instead of doing all they could to hinder it. We paid the price in American lives for our unpreparedness. The American Legion, developed fully and in time, could have saved some of those lives. Probably, even as it was, it saved some American lives by advancing our preparations one little step along the way.

The war taught Washington its lesson. Nowadays it does itself what once it would not even allow citizens to do for it.

And when we went into the war, Colonel Evans, then a captain, assigned to duty in New York, remembered the Legion, phoned me, found its records were in Washington, used by others, and then asked for duplicates. They, too, were already in use. But weren't there any records of any kind left for the Marine Corps to work on? Well there were the original applications of members from which the records and indexes had been made. Could he have *them?* Of course. And inside an hour a truck unloaded a bunch of husky marines in our office and away went those dusty bundles of applications filed in our office because there hadn't been any other place for them.

Yes, Camp-Fire can be proud that its own old American Legion did serve the country after all and that its name has been handed over to the newer and greater organization.

And now I'm meeting Colonel Evans again at Camp-Fire and glad to see him.

And a line concerning his story:

Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island.

As one of the latest recruits to report to the Camp-Fire I am following custom with a few remarks. After leaving Princeton before my class graduated in 1898, due to a lack of coordination with the faculty, I served with Co. M, 1st Wisconsin, in the Spanish War. I then, after having already put in a year doing police work for the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, joined the staff of the old *Evening Sun* in New York, covering the Cup Races between the *Columbia* and *Shamrock*, running a football column, covering police headquarters for three months, and general reporting. I then entered the Marine Corps as a second lieutenant in January, 1900.

AFTER two and a half years at sea in the Mediterranean, West Indies and South Atlantic Station, I did a tour of one year in the Philippines, and returned to the United States in time to sail for Panama in December, 1903, when we sent a brigade there to protect Panama after its secession from Columbia, as the treaty required that the United States keep the Isthmus open for transit. Johnny Poe, the old Princeton star, went down with us, and

he came back to regale Princeton reunions with some characteristic stories of his adventures with the leathernecks. In 1905 I was retired for physical disability, but remained on duty for two years as captain of the Marine Corps Rifle Team. In 1907 I was a member of the Palma Rifle Team which won the Palma Trophy in Canada, and in 1908 of the American Rifle Team which won the Olympic Match at Bisley, England.

When the war broke out I managed to qualify for return to the active list and served with the Sixth Marines over in France. In 1922 I did a two-year tour in Haiti, one of the fruits of which is my story in this issue.

Going back over my career I would say the high spots of color were on the relief expedition to Martinique following the eruption of Mt. Pelée, when we were driven out of St. Pierre by a minor eruption; witnessing the famous Marathon Race of the Olympics in 1908; Belleau Woods in June, 1918; and an airplane flight that carried me over Tortuga Island, the famous pirate stronghold on the north coast of Haiti, then over Christophe's famous Citadel and his old palace at Sans Souci in May, 1924.—FRANK E. EVANS, Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps.

IN 1902 President Simon Sam of Haiti fled the country after having looted the treasury. General Firmin then controlled the revolutionary forces in the South of Haiti, and in the North his rival, Nord Alexis, was in control.

Firmin had in command of his squadron of three gunboats Admiral Killick, a mulatto of English extraction, unusually well-educated, forceful, efficient and courageous. His flagship was the *Crete-à-Pierrot*, named after a famous battle between the blacks and the French in 1802.

Killick seized the Hamburg American liner *Marcomania* which attempted to run guns through Gonaives to the rival revolutionary force in the North. He was ashore, sick with fever, in Gonaives, when the German cruiser *Panther* steamed in with the ultimatum that the *Crete-à-Pierrot* surrender within an hour or be sunk. Killick dressed, boarded his gunboat, dressed ship, opened his magazines and sent the crew ashore. He had gone out ready to fight but his captain had, during his sickness, let the fires go out, and he found himself unable to steam or maneuver.

As the hour expired, and the *Panther's* landing party formed on deck, Killick tossed a lighted cigar into a magazine, and the *Crete-à-Pierrot* blew up. His torso was washed ashore, clad in full-dress coat, and was buried in the Place-d'-Armes with full military honors, on the spot where Dessalines declared Haiti an independent nation on New Year's Day, 1804. That is the basis of the story.—F. E. E.

IN CONNECTION with his story in this issue, a few words from Percy Charles Chandler. Incidentally, the story gives a very good picture of what a bull-fight is really like.

Havana, Cuba.

As regards the "The Bullfight," I have tried to obtain the facts as they actually occurred—it happened some years after I had left Gibraltar—but so far my efforts have not met with success. The Great War supervened, and of all the men I knew during my three years on the "Rock" there is not one left there now who can tell me about the cableman who fought the bulls in Linea. That this actually *did* occur there is no doubt, for many of my colleagues have seen the matter referred to in the newspapers. They remember it, as I myself do, in a casual way.—P. C. CHANDLER.

AT A January Camp-Fire H. R. Laudermilk asked the comrades for an explanation of a phenomenon he saw in Sterling, Colorado, February, 1923. A beam, as from a searchlight, ascended from every arc and incandescent street light for several hundred feet, bright and distinct, bluish, "thin" enough to see the stars through. Two below zero on the street, a slight breeze from the northwest, no clouds, no moon. He had found no one who could explain or had seen such lights elsewhere. A number of comrades have written in:

Detroit, Michigan.

My experience with these lights is almost identical to that of Mr. Laudermilk; have seen them but once, and never heard of them before nor since.

It was in Hardin, Montana, about five years ago. I arose at about four one January morning to catch an early train and beheld a spectacle identical to that described by Mr. Laudermilk. From every street light in town there was a beam of light about a foot in diameter extending straight upward for a distance of probably two hundred feet. The temperature was about ten below, the sky clear, and a little frost flying in the air.

I have never heard any authentic explanation of this phenomenon, but I have an idea that it is probably caused by reflection from the frost in the air. I hope some one will come forward with the proper dope on this question.—R. L. ASBURY.

Chicoutimi, P. Q., Canada.

While I am unable to explain the cause of these shafts of light. I have witnessed the same phenomenon on three different occasions (twice last year and once this) in Chicoutimi, Province of Quebec, Canada.

On the three occasions mentioned the temperature was 'way below zero, and there was a mist or fog.—J. E. ARDRON.

Pueblo, Colorado.

While I have never raised my voice in the Camp-Fire previous to this time, I take great interest in what is said there.

I have spent a good portion of my life in Sugar City, Colorado, and have witnessed this phenomenon not once, but literally dozens of times. The explanation seems to me to be very simple, and I *think* it will cover the case in question.

The beams may be seen whenever two conditions are fulfilled, and these are: a clear night and a coat of snow. The lights in all these small western towns are equipped with shades that concentrate a good part of the light on a point directly beneath and

the snow acts as a reflector, sending a beam like that of a searchlight, far up into the night sky.

It is a beautiful display and from outside of town it looks like an anti-aircraft nest.

Does this explain it, Mr. Laudermilk?—HUGO RODECK.

Hibbing, Minnesota.

Up here it is a very common sight in the winter to see the same thing but it generally occurs when the thermometer is around 20 to 40 below zero and the air very still. At such times above every arc light in town a shaft of light about 100 feet high perfectly straight and still, and about the width of the cover above the arc light, reaches above each arc, but in the town where the white way lights are, no such thing occurs only above the arcs. At such times when you get under the light, the frost particles shine in the air like dust in a sunbeam in a room in summer, and if the moon is full or nearly so, there will be a cross with the moon in the center, and each side of the cross will be as long, and of the same intensity, as those extending above the arc light, but if a breeze springs up, the lights above the arcs disappear. They don't fade, but just go out as if a switch were turned off.

These lights do not shine for just a few minutes, but shine all night, providing the air is still and the weather very cold, and they go out when the gray of dawn appears. At such times when the sun comes up two of these shafts of light will be seen one on each side of the sun somewhere around 500 or 600 feet on each side of it. These are sun dogs.

I imagine the frost in the air is the cause of the lights above the arcs and the cross on the moon and the sun dogs, too, but I may be wrong and maybe some of our Camp Fire comrades can give us some more information on it. But as Mr. Laudermilk said he had never met any one who had seen the phenomena, I just had to write and tell him that it is nothing new. We see it so often that we pay no attention to it. But I can't say I have ever seen it when it has been only 2 below zero, because that can't be called real cold weather and this only occurs when it is real cold.—GEORGE EDWARDS.

P. S. When you get within a block of the arc the light cannot be seen, but at two blocks it is very plain.

Regina, Sask., Canada.

This is a very common phenomenon in this part of the world, making a very pretty effect, as we have a large number of street lights. It is especially effective on the long straight streets with street railway lines and lights down the center. If one stands in line it looks like one thick beam.

Do not know what causes this; but my opinion is this: I have noticed that, when the effect is at its best, the air is full of very fine particles of snow. This can plainly be seen around the lights. The manifestations usually occurred after a relatively mild spell, followed by sharp frost (10 to 20 below zero). I think, is caused by the moisture in the upper air being frozen and falling as fine snow, the refraction causing the beams.—EDWIN J. BLANCHE.

THE same phenomenon was witnessed by Jean Clare of Walkersville, Ontario, Canada, during the winter of 1904 or 1905 at Fort D. A. Russell, Wyoming. This comrade enclosed a newspaper clipping with a February 2, 1905, news despatch from Calgary describing the same phenomenon as seen at that place the night before and stating that weather experts attributed it to the exceptional lightness of the air and its total freedom from moisture-laden dust particles.

THE fairly common occurence of the phenomenon seems established, but we seem still to lack a final scientific explanation. Will some of the weather scientists among us give us the answer?

A FEW weeks ago A. W. Payne of the Department of Middle American Research, Tulane University, wrote us for a copy of Mr. Coleman's Camp-Fire talk on the ruins of Peten and later we received the following interesting letter of thanks written from his university's Honduras expedition in the field. I very particularly hope he will, as he says, tell us more about the Mayas. Most of us know something of them, but nobody knows much and we'd like to hear from one of those who know most.

As one of us has recently challenged the civilization of Rome as inferior to those of China, Carthage and India, an examination into another old civilization is timely.

Puerto Cortes, Honduras.

Many thanks for your note of March 24, with enclosed clipping of the letter to *Adventure* for which I asked. I just happened down to the coast in time to get the letter.

MR. COLEMAN'S letter is most interesting, but I would like to call to his attention the extensive exploration and archeological study undertaken in the Maya Area since 1900, which, probably, has escaped him. Would refer him to the publications of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University; the "Biologia Centro Americana," the archeology of which was the work of Mr. Alfred Maudslay, of London; publications of the Carnegie Institution, of Washington; of the Smithsonian Institution; and of others.

The ruins of the formerly stupendous civilization of the Mayas, which are found in northern Honduras northern and eastern Guatemala, Yacatan, British Honduras and the southern states of Mexico, are more than "stupendous", "interesting," "amazing," or whatever terms you wish to apply. The English language lacks proper words to use! This Department was organized less than a year ago to undertake further research. I should say simply "research," for, despite the good work that has been done in this area, the amount of time applied has never even scraped the surface of this field. Some day Americans, of whatever nationality, will wake up to the fact that here we have an archeological

field, surpassing, in many minds, the interest and, possibly value, of the various fields now being exploited and receiving press and public attention.

Though less than a year old at this writing, we have three expeditions in the field. One, of exploration entirely, en route from lower Vera Cruz State, into Guatemala, Yucatan and British Honduras. The second, botanical alone, starting a two years' field program in the State of Tobasco, Mexico. I am now in Honduras making a rough preliminary survey along various scientific lines, to open the way to bringing down a large party after the rainy season of next fall.

FROM Mr. Coleman's brief description it is impossible to say just to which of the numerous ruined Maya cities he refers. So far, however, I believe more than four hundred ruin sites have been put on the map of Guatemala and Yucatan, and, as he says, some of these, and near the Peten region also, far overshadow the ruined cities of Copan, Quirigua and Palenque. The former is in northeastern Honduras; the second in southeastern Guatemala, the third in the State of Chiapas, Mexico, not very far from Guatemala.

As to this being an uninhabited country, it can be said that many descendants of the formerly great Maya Empire now live there, but have been so oppressed by centuries of white men they wisely fight shy of the latter. Their huts, gathered in towns of a half dozen at the very most, are hard to find. When found, the inhabitants, forewarned, have usually taken to the bush until the disturbers shall have left. But few white men have met and held converse with them.

I would be inclined to scout the reports of finds of old skulls with teeth inlaid with diamonds. Will say, however, that in the Maya Area teeth have been found, incisors, with inlaid jade or jadeite discs. The skill with which this was accomplished was marvelous. Moreover, dentists of the present day, who have examined these few finds, declare the most marvelous thing is that the teeth did not decay. They have said that should a modern dentist try such a thing the teeth would decay and the discs fall out. Yet the Mayas had neither iron nor steel with which to make instruments for this work.

WHILE this Department is to undertake all manner of research work in the countries from Texas to Colombia, archeology is, to the lay mind of course, the most interesting section. Some day I'd like to find time to tell *Adventure's* readers something of the Mayas, who long preceded the Aztecs, also most likely the original Peruvians and Bolivians whom we are now, incorrectly, wont to call the Incas. Who are credited with the possibility of being the first discoverers of the zero and place-value-position in mathematics, without which the latter can not exist. Who were such great astronomers as to have perfected a calendar at least a thousand years Before Christ, which was better and more exact than any used in the world at the time of the Conquest, when the Maya Empire had long fallen into decay and practically vanished as such. Who were very likely the devisers of poured concrete construction, using a lime mortar in place of cement as their temple and palace ruins still show. Whose chief religious city was a mecca to which flocked pilgrims from as far south as Panama, at least, and as far north as the States, as objects found in a sacrificial well at this city, now called Chichen Itza, show. Who were engineers, theologians, experts at government, artists, architects, road builders, painters, and exceptionally skilled in medicine, to list but a few of their attainments, And finally, whose origin and dates are shrouded in impenetrable mystery, and whose highly developed system of hieroglyphic writing is still unreadable and has stumped many fine brains.

Is it any wonder that one waxes so ravingly enthusiastic over such ancients, as to so unduly prolong a short letter of thanks?

My best wishes and compliments to *Adventure* and her crew.—A. W. PAYNE, Assistant Director, Honduras Expedition, The Tulane University of Louisiana.

WHAT about the maps we run along with such of our stories as seem to profit by them in clearness and interest? They had, as a general idea, the strong approval of all of you who voiced opinion, but here in the office we've been debating several questions concerning them and you the readers are the only ones who can settle those questions. We'll be glad if you'll tell us how you feel about them.

Shall we use more of them or fewer? Sometimes the names on the maps haven't seemed to us sufficiently legible. Shall we take enough more space for the maps to make all details clearer? Where are they most needed and welcome—with historical stories or with ordinary stories whose geographical details are determined by the author alone? Which do you like better—maps showing the location of the stories in relation to the rest of the world or maps of some particular part in which much of the story centers?

Of course it's difficult to generalize, since each story is more or less a case in itself, but we'll be glad to have any and all opinions that will guide us in making the maps suit the greatest possible number of you.—A.S.H.

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64. Middle Western U. S. Part 5 Great Lakes

H. C. GARDNER, 1909 Stout St., Denver, Colo. Seamanship, navigation, courses and distances, reefs and shoals, lights and landmarks, charts; laws, fines, penalties; river navigation.

65. Eastern U. S. Part 1 Adirondacks, New York; Lower Miss. (St. Louis down), Atchafalaya across La. swamps, St. Francis River, Arkansas Bottoms, North and East Shores of Lake Mich.

RAYMOND S. SPEARS, Inglewood, Calif. Transcontinental and other auto-trail tours (Lincoln, National, Old Santa Fe, Yellowstone, Red Ball, Old Spanish Trail, Dixie Highway, Ocean to Ocean, Pike's Peak); regional conditions, outfits, suggestions; skiff, outboard, small launch river and lake tripping and cruising; trapping; fresh water and button shelling; wildcraft, camping, nature study.

66. Eastern U. S. Part 2 Motor-Boat and Canoe Cruising on Delaware and Chesapeake Bays and Tributary Rivers

HOWARD A. SHANNON, care *Adventure*. Motor-boat equipment and management. Oystering, crabbing, eeling, black bass, pike, sea-trout, croakers; general fishing in tidal waters. Trapping and trucking on Chesapeake Bay. Water fowl and upland game in Maryland and Virginia. Early history of Delaware, Virginia and Maryland.

67. Eastern U. S. Part 3 Marshes and Swamplands of the Atlantic Coast from Philadelphia to Jacksonville

HOWARD A. SHANNON, care *Adventure*. Okefinokee and Dismal, Okranoke and the Marshes of Glynn; Croatan Indians of the Carolinas. History, traditions, customs, hunting, modes of travel, snakes.

68. Eastern U. S. Part 4 Southern Appalachians

WILLIAM R. BARBOUR, care *Adventure*. Alleghanies, Blue Ridge, Smokies, Cumberland Plateau, Highland Rim. Topography, climate, timber, hunting and fishing, automobiling, national forests, general information.

69. Eastern U. S. Part 5 Tenn., Ala. Miss., N. and S. C., Fla. and Ga.

HAPSBURG LIEBE, care *Adventure*. Except Tennessee River and Atlantic seaboard. Hunting, fishing, camping; logging, lumbering, sawmilling, saws.

70. Eastern U. S. Part 6 Maine

DR. G. E. HATHORNE, 70 Main St., Bangor, Me. For all territory *west* of the Penobscot River. Fishing, hunting, canoeing, guides, outfits, supplies.

71. Eastern U. S. Part 7 Eastern Maine

H. B. STANWOOD, East Sullivan, Me. For all territory *east* of the Penobscot River. Hunting, fishing, canoeing, mountaineering, guides; general information.

72. Eastern U. S. Part 8 Vt., N. H., Conn., R. I. and Mass.

HOWARD R. VOIGHT, 35 Dawson Ave., West Haven, Conn. Fishing, hunting, travel, roads; business conditions; history.

73. Eastern U. S. Part 9 New Jersey

FRANCIS H. BENT, Jr., Farmingdale, N. J. Topography, hunting, fishing; automobile routes; history; general information.

74. Eastern U. S. Part 10 Maryland

LAWRENCE EDMUND ALLEN, 201 Bowery Ave., Frostburg, Md. Mining, touring, summer resorts, historical places, general information.

A.—Radio

DONALD MCNICOL, 132 Union Road, Roselle Park, N. J. Telegraphy, telephony, history, broadcasting, apparatus, invention, receiver construction, portable sets.

B.—Mining and Prospecting

VICTOR SHAW, Box 958, Ketchikan, Alaska. Territory anywhere on the continent of North America. Questions on mines, mining law, mining, mining methods or practise; where and how to prospect, how to outfit; how to make the mine after it is located; how to work it and how to sell it; general geology necessary for miner or prospector, including the precious and base metals and economic minerals such as pitchblende or uranium, gypsum, mica, cryolite, etc. Questions regarding investment or the merits of any particular company are excluded.

C.—Old Songs That Men Have Sung

A department for collecting hitherto unpublished specimens and for answering questions concerning all songs of the out-of-doors that have had sufficient virility to outlast their immediate day; chanteys, "forebitters," ballads —songs of outdoor men—sailors, lumberjacks, soldiers cowboys, pioneers, rivermen, canal-men, men of the Great Lakes, voyageurs, railroad men, miners, hoboes, plantation hands, etc.—R. W. GORDON, 4 Conant Hall, Cambridge, Mass.

D.—Weapons, Past and Present

Rifles, shotguns, pistols, revolvers, ammunition and edged weapons. (Any questions on the arms adapted to a particular locality should *not* be sent to this department but to the "Ask Adventure" editor covering the district.)

1.—All Shotguns, including foreign and American makes; wing shooting. JOHN B. THOMPSON ("Ozark Ripley"), care *Adventure*.

2.—All Rifles, Pistols and Revolvers, including foreign and American makes. DONEGAN WIGGINS, R. F. D. 3, Lock Box 75, Salem, Ore.

3.—Edged Weapons, and Firearms Prior to 1800. Swords, pikes, knives, battle-axes, etc., and all firearms of the flintlock, matchlock, wheel-lock and snaphaunce varieties. LEWIS APPLETON BARKER, 40 University Road, Brookline, Mass.

E.—Salt and Fresh Water Fishing

JOHN B. THOMPSON ("Ozark Ripley"), care *Adventure*. Fishing-tackle and equipment; fly and bait casting and bait; camping-outfits; fishing-trips.

F.—Forestry in the United States

ERNEST W. SHAW, South Carver, Mass. Big-game hunting, guides and equipment; national forests of the Rocky Mountain States. Questions on the policy of the Government regarding game and wild-animal life in the forests.

G.—Tropical Forestry

WILLIAM R. BARBOUR, care *Adventure*. Tropical forests and forest products; their economic possibilities; distribution, exploration, etc.

H.—Aviation

LIEUT.-COL. W. G. SCHAUFFLER, JR., 2940 Newark St. N. W., Washington, D. C. Airplanes; airships; aeronautical motors; airways and landing fields; contests; Aero Clubs; insurance; aeronautical laws; licenses; operating data; schools; foreign activities; publications. No questions answered regarding aeronautical stock-promotion companies.

I.—Army Matters, United States and Foreign

FRED. F. FLEISCHER, care *Adventure*. *United States:* Military history, Military policy. National Defense Act of 1920. Regulations and matters in general for organized reserves. Army and uniform regulations, infantry drill regulations, field service regulations. Tables of organization. Citizens' military training camps. *Foreign:* Strength and distribution of foreign armies before the war. Uniforms. Strength of foreign armies up to date. History of armies of countries covered by Mr. Fleischer in general, "Ask Adventure" section. *General:* Tactical questions on the late war. Detailed information on all operations during the late war from the viewpoint of the German high command. Questions regarding enlisted personnel and officers, except such as are published in Officers' Directory, can not be answered.

J.—Navy Matters

LIEUT. FRANCIS V. GREENE, U. S. N. R., 245 Bergen Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. Regulations, history, customs, drill gunnery; tactical and strategic questions, ships, propulsion, construction, classification; general information. Questions regarding the enlisted personnel and officers except such as contained in the Register of Officers can not be answered.

K.—American Anthropology North of the Panama Canal

ARTHUR WOODWARD, 1244¼ Leighton Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. Customs, dress, architecture, pottery and decorative arts, weapons and implements, fetishism, social divisions.

L.—First Aid on the Trail

CLAUDE P. FORDYCE, M. D., Falls City, Neb. Medical and surgical emergency care, wounds, injuries, common illnesses, diet, pure water, clothing, insect and snake-bite; industrial first aid and sanitation for mines, logging camps, ranches and exploring parties as well as for camping trips of all kinds. First-aid outfits. Meeting all health hazards of the outdoor life, arctic, temperate and tropical zones.

M.—Health-Building Outdoors

CLAUDE P. FORDYCE, M. D., Falls City, Neb. How to get well and how to keep well in the open air, where to go and how to travel. Tropical hygiene. General health-building, safe exercise, right food and habits, with as much adaptation as possible to particular cases.

N.—Railroading in the U. S., Mexico and Canada

R. T. NEWMAN, 1001 Park St., Anaconda, Mont. General office, especially immigration, work; advertising work, duties of station agent, bill clerk, ticket agent, passenger brakeman and rate clerk. General information.

O.—Herpetology

DR. G. K. NOBLE, American Museum of Natural History, 77th St., and Central Park West, New York, N. Y. General information concerning reptiles (snakes, lizards, turtles, crocodiles) and amphibians (frogs, toads, salamanders); their customs, habits and distribution.

P.—Entomology

DR. FRANK E. LUTZ, Ramsey, N. J. General information about insects and spiders; venomous insects, disease-carrying insects, insects attacking man, etc.; distribution.

Q.—STANDING INFORMATION

For **Camp-Fire Stations** write LAURENCE JORDAN, care *Adventure*.

For general information on **U. S. and its possessions** write Supt. of Public Documents, Wash. D. C., for catalog of all Government publications. For **U. S., its possessions and most foreign countries**, the Dept. of Com., Wash., D. C.

For the **Philippines, Porto Rico,** and customs receiverships in **Santo Domingo** and **Haiti, the Bureau of Insular Affairs**, War Dept., Wash., D. C.

For **Alaska, the Alaska Bureau, Chamber of Commerce**, Central Bldg., Seattle, Wash.

For **Hawaii**, Hawaii Promotion Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Honolulu, T. H. Also, Dept. of the Interior, Wash., D. C.

For **Cuba, Bureau of Information, Dept. of Agri., Com.** and Labor, Havana, Cuba.

The Pan-American Union for general information on **Latin-American matters** or for specific data. Address L. S. ROWE, Dir. Gen., Wash., D. C.

For **R. C. M. P.**, Commissioner Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Ottawa, Can. Only unmarried British subjects, age 18 to 40, above 5 ft. 8 in. and under 175 lbs.

For **State Police of any State**, FRANCIS H. BENT, JR., Farmingdale, N. J.

For **Canal Zone**, the Panama Canal Com., Wash., D. C.

National Rifle Association of America, Brig. Gen. Fred H. Phillips, Jr., Sec'y, 1108 Woodward Bldg., Wash., D. C.

United States **Revolver** Ass'n. W. A. MORRALL, Sec'y-Treas., Hotel Virginia, Columbus, O.

National parks, how to get there and what to do when there. Address National Park Service, Wash., D. C.

For whereabouts of **Navy men**, Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department, Wash., D. C.

Home-Made Water Filters

HOW to make an easy one:

Request:—"Won't you let me know, please, if the drinking water in the sections where the oil wells are is tainted with the oil.

I should like to know what will prevent the oil from going through, but will let the water off. Chamois skin lets gas or oil through, but not water. There must be something that will do the opposite." —MRS. L. M. LEA, Tottenville, Staten Island, N. Y.

Reply, by Mr. Whiteaker:—There are several kinds of filters that are used to purify water. The water in the oil field is in most cases drinkable without being filtered. The oil wells usually are from about 2,000 to 2,500 feet deep. Some of these wells are ruined by salt water seeping into them. The wells that furnish the drinking water in these communities are very seldom over one hundred and fifty feet deep, so do not come in contact with the petroleum or crude oil except where the water well and the oil well are very close to each other.

A simple water filter for domestic purposes is sometimes made by stuffing a piece of sponge in the bottom of a funnel or the hole of a flower pot, and then placing above this a layer of smooth stones, then a layer of coarse sand, and above this a layer of pounded charcoal three or four inches thick. Another layer of pebbles should be placed above the charcoal to prevent it from being stirred up when the water is poured in. This filter requires occasional cleaning by the replacement of the charcoal.

Another method consists of a couple of flower pots, one above the other; the lower one is fitted with the sponge and filtering layers above described, and the upper one with a sponge only. The upper one should be the larger, the lower one the stronger so as to hold the upper pot. The two pots thus arranged are placed upon a three-legged stool with a hole in it, through which the projecting part of the lower sponge passes, and the water drops into a jug placed below. The upper pot serves as a reservoir, and its sponge stops the coarser impurities, and thus the filtering layers of the lower one may be used for two or three years without being renewed if the top sponge be occasionally cleaned.

The full statement of the departments, as given in this issue, is printed only in alternate issues.

First Aid in the Tropics

HOW to keep healthy in the jungle:

Request:—"I intend to prospect around in some Latin-American countries and would like to know what to take along in my first-aid outfit and how to use it. Especially remedies against fevers, disentery and snake-bites. If you know some books on this subject, will you kindly recommend them to me."—GEORGE SPINGIS, Detroit, Mich.

Reply, by Dr. Fordyce:—I am sending you herewith a copy of my booklet on "Taking the Place of the Doctor" which gives you general ideas on first-aid and outfits. For tropical use I would add a a quantity of quinine in 5-grain capsules and some of the sun cholera tablets.

Ordinary care of health, the purification of all drinking water, protection against insects which carry disease and proper clothing is all that is needed, but nowhere is strict attention to hygiene and disease prevention so necessary as in the tropics and the penalty is always at hand for neglect. Things which affect disease especially in the tropics are sunlight, humidity, insects, impure food and water.

Tropical sunlight is more potent than in temperate zones, not alone because the perpendicular rays make the intervening protective layer of atmosphere relatively thinner, but also because this results in greater intensity of illumination in any exposed area.

It was long thought that actinic rays which are chemically active were the only ones which do harm but in reality the most harm comes from the long heat waves than the short actinic waves, so keep out of the sun as much as possible from 9 to 4 o'clock; do little work then—natives take their siestas around noon when the sun rays are the strongest. If living in a tent have an extra fly over it to help to keep the sun's rays out; smoked or neutral tinted glasses help against the intensity of light and, if one must be in the sun, the helmet and spine-pad are necessary. The sun helmet should be of cork not pith—which melts in a rain—and should have double *terai*.

The helmet is a wide felt and then another wide felt hat on top of that. The vertical rays of the sun get "lost" between the two hats. The spine-pad is a quilted affair like a flat-iron lifter, on the outside is brown flannel and inside a gaudy orange-colored fabric to intercept the actinic rays. It is eight to ten inches wide and shaped to button down the back. Wear a silk handerchief about the neck as the spine and back of the neck are the most vulnerable to the sun.

WHILE the sunlight has a great deal to do with the maintenance of health in the tropics yet there is another factor—humidity. A temperature of 110 degrees is not so exhausting, but along the coast where one sweats in streams at 90 or 95 degrees it is most depressing. In the highlands the nights are cold (down to 40 degrees at 7,000 feet altitude, with a noon temperature of 60 degrees. Acclimization is undoubtedly obtainable by healthy whites from the temperate zones in the tropics, but colonization of lowlands with much humidity by a white race is regarded as impossible by all modern authorities.

One more thing in the way of equipment I wish to call attention to in considering the maintenance of health in the tropics and that is the so-called "cholera belt," which is merely a woolen band worn about the abdomen at night to prevent chill. Chills in the temperate zones result usually in no more than a coryza or cold in the head, but in the tropics —look out—it means intestinal troubles.

Practically all of the fevers in the tropics are introduced into the human body through food or the bites of insects. Foods should be cooked, all water should be boiled furiously for five minutes and then cooled in a felt-covered canteen or desert water-bag in a breeze, or it can be rendered safe by chemical means; by using the halazone tablets mentioned in the first-aid booklet. For protection against mosquitoes or flies have your tent or house screened with cloth or wire, 18 to 22 meshes to the inch. If on the trail a head net is desirable and some people like to use the repellants such as bamber oil, composed of oil of citronella one and one-half parts, kerosene one part and coconut oil two parts.

ATTENTION to a well-balanced diet is needed. Beri-beri for example is due to a deficiency in vitamines; so to offset it we eat yeast, *dal* and *atta* and fresh vegetables, and avoid polished rice. Some people do nothing in the way of drug taking to prevent malaria when in a known malarial country but rely on prevention of mosquito bites, and if they do get the disease then they begin active treatment. Others take the "quinine preventative" consisting of 10 to 15 grains once daily, in the evening, an hour before dusk and on a full stomach which is protective within a limited period.

One should take a hot bath daily and never sleep on the ground—the air mattress is good or use a cot or hammock. The lightest Jaegar wool underwear is essential to prevent chill in the shade or in the breeze or at dusk. For diarrhea the well-known sun cholera tablets should be in traveler's kit. Blackham's "Aids to Tropical Hygiene" (William Wood & Co., New York, $1.50) is recommended.

If you don't want an answer enough to enclose FULL return postage to carry it, you don't want it.

Turquoise Mines

NOT an all-year proposition.

Request:—"I wish certain information regarding turquoise mines in Nevada.

Please tell me in what part are they found? Of what value are they? Does the color ever change? I would also like to know of some place where I could get several pounds of the raw material.

Any information you can give me about turquoise will be appreciated very much. If this letter is sent to *Adventure* please withhold my name.

Thank you a thousand times for any bother I may cause."———

Reply, by Mr. Harriman:—Nevada mines mighty little turquoise, according to lapidaries who are among my friends. The main supply among jewelers here comes from Mineral Park, Arizona, a few miles east of Chloride. Tiffany, of New York City, has a mine near Silver City, New Mexico, from which he takes a supply now and then, closing the mine between bites, as it were. He may not take out any turquoise for several years.

I have no means of knowing what value is placed upon turquoise mines of Nevada, but venture the assertion that no wholesaler would make any very large offer for one.

The Southwest Gem & Jewelry Co., 315 West 5th Street, Los Angeles, handles turquoise. The price per pound runs from $3.50 to $20. The quality most used is that for which they ask from $5 to $6 a pound; turquoise containing a good proportion of matrix.

Turquoise does change color when worn. That is an old, established fact since medieval times, at least. It was probably well known when turquoise was first used as an ornament, and how far back that is no one really knows.

You could very likely get a supply on excellent terms by driving across to Mineral Park and selecting what you want at the mine.

Address your question direct to the expert in charge, NOT to the magazine.

"ASK ADVENTURE" editors are appointed with extreme care. If you can meet our exacting requirements and qua ify as an expert on some topic or territory not now covered, we shall be glad to talk matters over with you. Address JOSEPH COX, *Adventure*, New York.

LOST TRAILS

NOTE—We offer this department of the "Camp-Fire" free of charge to those of our readers who wish to get in touch again with old friends or acquaintances from whom the years have separated them. For the benefit of the friend you seek, *give your own name if possible.* All inquiries along this line, unless containing contrary instructions, will be considered as intended for publication in full with inquirer's name, in this department, at our discretion. We reserve the right in case inquirer refuses his name, to substitute any numbers or other names, to reject any item that seems to us unsuitable, and to use our discretion in all matters pertaining to this department. Give also your own full address. We will, however, forward mail through this office, assuming no responsibility therefor. We have arranged with the Montreal *Star* to give additional publication in their "Missing Relative Column," weekly and daily editions, to any of our inquiries for persons last heard of in Canada. Except in case of relatives, inquiries from one sex to the other are barred.

HERRIDGE, ALBERT. Resident of San Francisco, Calif. Mother died suddenly on March 26, 1925. Why not correspond with your sister, who would be glad to hear from you.—Address MRS. SADIE KEMMET, 3802 Boulevard, West Hoboken, N. J.

BOWERS, SARAH. Left The Dalles, Oregon, when a child in 1880 to go to California with a family named Neats and Neats' father-in-law, Adams. Any information will be greatly appreciated by her brother—O. C. BOWERS, 423 West 6 Street, The Dalles, Oregon.

BOWDEN, LAURENCE WARREN. Age sixteen. Was last heard of at Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Was with a stacking man there. Believed to have headed toward British Columbia. His brother would like to hear from him. Address—ALPHEUS J. BOWDEN, Burke, Idaho.

ATKINSON, F. D. Last heard of in September, 1924, when he was employed by Childs Café, 238 Superior Ave., Cleveland, Ohio. Blue eyes, red wavy hair, straight nose, two deep lines across forehead, two deep lines between eyes, weight about 160 lbs., age 27 years. Any information will be appreciated by his wife.—Address MRS. F. D. ATKINSON, Gen. Del., Cincinnati, Ohio.

PATDO ALEJANDRO. Last heard of in San Francisco, Calif., about 1915. Said to have an American wife, two children at that time. Native of Bacolar, Pampango Prov., stout, color brown, good teeth. Left Manila Transport *Thomas*, 1904. Age 40 years. Any information will be appreciated by his mother.—Address P. GASSMAN, Gen. Del. Manila, P. I.

LUIZ. Information is desired of the whereabouts of the children of Manoel Machado Luiz, who died in Jordan Valley, Malheur County, Oregon, October 20, 1897, aged 27 years, leaving a wife (name thought to be Anna Luiz), one infant son, Manoel aged 8 months. Daughter was born in March, 1898. Information concerning their present address or establishing the fact of their death will be appreciated by members of the family settling an old estate.—Address ANTONIO M. LUIZ, San Pablo, Contra Costa County, California.

ARTHUR. Please write to me. I will forgive you for what you have done. Leah is so cute, you should see her now.—Address CLARA, 825 4th Ave., S. Minneapolis, Minn.

Please notify us at once when you have found your man.

VAN HELDEREN, T. C. (DUTCHY). Any information as to his present whereabouts will be appreciated.—Address FRED G. TAYLOR, 424 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, New York.

CLARK, TOM (SLIM). Was with me in Wyoming in 1923. Please write your old buddy Whitie.—Address F. E. GRAHAM, Gen. Del., Plymouth, Michigan.

NORSWORTHY, TOM. Last seen in Boyce, La., going to New Orleans. He was known as Red on the J. B. Pooles shows in Brownwood, Texas, where he worked on the ferris-wheel. His home is on the east coast of Florida. Any information will be appreciated.—Address LOUIS C. MAY, 115 Woodward Ave., Asheville, N. C.

SHIPP FAMILY. Some of my folks want information that will entitle them to membership in D.A.R. My grandfather was Thomas Allen Shipp, son of Mark Shipp. Information as to births and deaths and burial places, and particularly with reference to Revolutionary ancestors, desired.—Address N. P. SHIPP, P. O. Box 602 Wilson, North Carolina.

McCARROLL, CHAS. Ex-soldier and sailor. Now about 24 years old. Last saw him in New York City, about four years ago. The old gang is broken up, Pop and Red have been killed and Dutch is lost track of. Please write to your old buddy.—Address JIM MAC, care of *Adventure*.

STOCKMAN, ED AND HARDY. A buddy who batched with you in Burk Burnett, Texas in 1919, would like to get in toueh with you. Do you remember Pop and Mac from New York? Please write.—Address JIM MAC, care of *Adventure*.

DEWERS, JACK, MARTY McGEE, ARTHUR HARRISS. A buddy who sailed with you into New Orleans six years ago and made that trip to Spanish Fort would like to hear from you. Please write.—Address JIM MAC, care of *Adventure*.

BALDWIN, CHAS. OR JOE HERBERT. Shipmates with me at Valparaiso on the *Sherman* in 1917. Please write.—Address JIM MAC, care of *Adventure*.

JOHNSON, THEODORE, WILLIAM, OSCAR AND IRENE. Children of Theodore Johnson, Sr., now deceased. Mr. Johnson had blue eyes, light hair, height about 5 feet 3 inches, weight about 130 lbs. Of Swedish decent. A cabinet-maker by trade. Theodore, Jr., joined the Marines after receiving discharge from Navy two years ago. The others are supposed to be in Chicago. Any information will be appreciated.—Address MRS. THEODORE JOHNSON, 1511 Harney St., Vancouver, Washington.

CARD, FRANK. Last seen in and about Sheffield, Ill., in 1913 or 1914. Age 55 years, 5 feet 5 inches tall, weight about 150 lbs., dark complexion. Any information will be appreciated by his son.—Address FRANK CARD, JR., 411 S. Ashland Blvd., Chicago, Ill.

SCHABARUM, LEO P. Your brother is very anxious to get in touch with you. Please write immediately.—J. A. McDONALD, Box 13374, Represa, Calif.

CULBERSON, ALBERT JAMES. Formerly of Fort Russell, Wyoming. Cowpuncher. Any information will be appreciated.—Address ROBERT MCKNIGHT, 4030 Arcade Bldg., Seattle, Wash.

THE following have been inquired for in either the June 30 or July 20, 1925 issues of Adventure. They can get the name and address of the inquirer from this magazine.

ANDERSON, HAROLD; Atkinson, F. D.; Baldbridge, Capt.; Beyersdorfer, Albert G.; Brendle, John; Campbell, Robert; Carter, Henry B.; Clarke, Corporal; Daley, John F.; Duffield, Harry; France, James; Gibbs, Everett; Haas, H.; Ingle, Horace; McCalmont, Margaret; Orenak, Tom; Padgett, Jennings, A.; Patdo, Alejandro; Rhodes, C. D.; Stafford, J.; Tarbell, Elliott; Thompson, W. T.; Vesper Pvt. Otto; Walker, Red; White, Dan; Williams, Thomas R.; Zwinge, Henry J.

MISCELLANEOUS—E. S. J.; Happy Davis, Johnny Lisse, Jack "Sheik," Pollock and Harry Blackman; S. O. L.; T. O.

THE TRAIL AHEAD

AUGUST 20TH ISSUE

Besides the **complete novel** and the **two complete novelettes** mentioned on the second contents page of this issue, the next *Adventure* will bring you the following stories:

RABBIT TRACKS — ***Charles P. Mueller***
He was afraid and went away.

STAND TO HORSE — ***Fairfax Downey***
Never make a stable sergeant stand reveille!

CHIEN — ***Raymond S. Spears***
The mongrel was no cur.

OUT OF THE HOLE — ***Walter J. Coburn***
"Long John" Carver shoots square.

THE BLACK SUIT — ***Leslie McFarlane***
"Siwash Sam" Sloane selected snappy suitings.

THE THREE ISSUES following the next will contain *long* stories by Robert Simpson, H. Bedford-Jones, Walter J. Coburn, William Byron Mowery, L. Patrick Greene, Romaine H. Lowdermilk, Farnham Bishop, W. C. Tuttle; a long article by J. D. Sweeney; short stories by Theodore Seixas Solomons, Raymond S. Spears, H. S. Cooper, J. H. Greene, Charles Victor Fischer, L. Paul, Ralph R. Perry, John Murray Reynolds, Wilkeson O'Connell, Bill Adams, E. S. Pladwell, F. St. Mars, Bruce Johns, and others; stories of traders in Africa, cowboys on the Western range, fishermen off Georges Banks, treasure-hunters in Chinese islands, Texas Rangers on the Border, prospectors in Alaska, explorers on floating islands, fur pirates off Siberia, gobs on the Atlantic, revolutionists in Central America, soldiers on the Western front, Norsemen in Labrador, hardcase skippers and bucko mates, daring men in dangerous places all around the world.